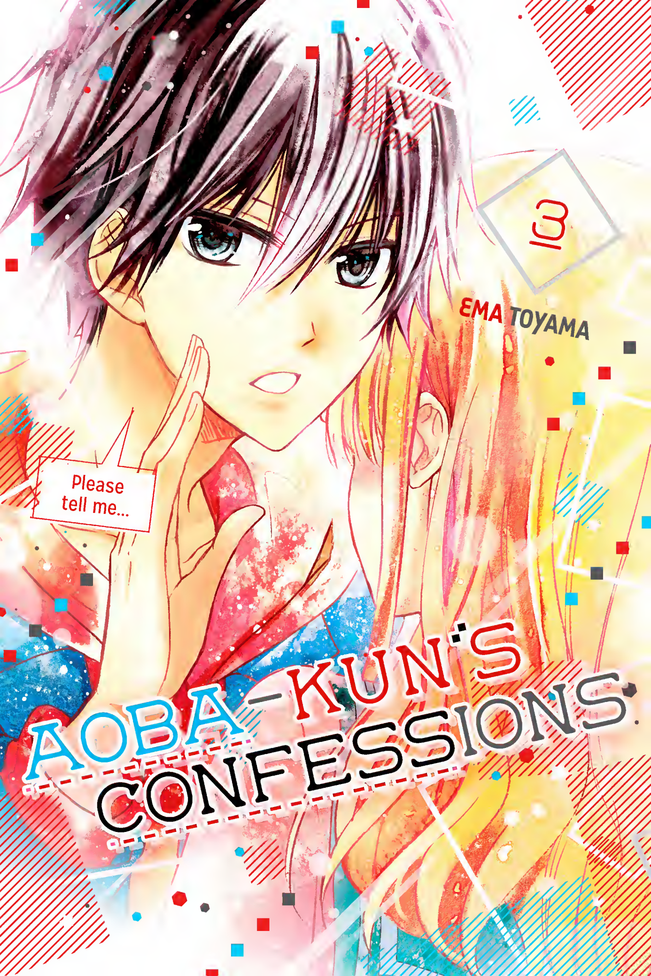
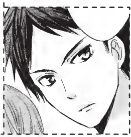

3
EMA TOYAMA
Please tell me...
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

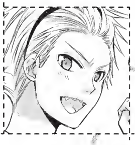
CHARACTERS

BASKETBALL TEAM MEMBERS



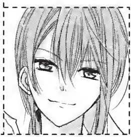
TAIKI IWASE

The team captain, who lives and breathes basketball.
High-school 2nd Year.



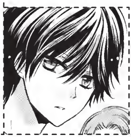
TSUYOSHI OKAMOTO

Often the butt of jokes.
High-school 2nd Year.



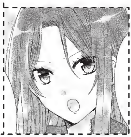
RYOSUKE KAZANUMA

The intellectual vice-captain.
High-school 2nd Year.



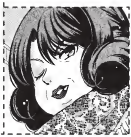
NAO INOHARA

Aoba's best friend.
High-school 1st Year.



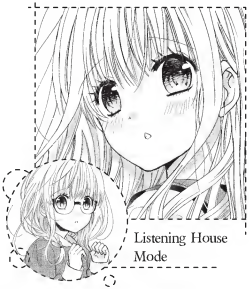
KYOKO MATSUMAE

Manager.
High-school 1st Year.



MARIA SAKURADA

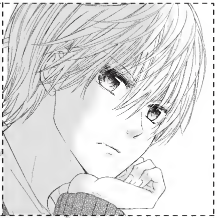
Mayo's aunt.
She runs the "Listening House."



Listening House Mode

MAYO SAKURADA

A quiet girl who isn't good at talking to people. In order to conquer her weaknesses, she starts a part-time job at a Listening House as a person who listens to other people's problems.
She joined the basketball team as a manager in order to understand Aoba's worries.



KOTA AOBA

The basketball team's star player who's popular with the girls, he went to the same junior high school as Mayo.
He seems to be hiding a worry that he can't share with anyone.
He's Mayo's first customer at the Listening House.

STORY

A high-school loner with poor communication skills, Mayo starts a strange job as a "Listening House girl" where she listens to people's stories. But her first customer is the school basketball team's star player Aoba, who Mayo thought was flawless and the epitome of social stardom! In order to hear about Aoba's worries, Mayo becomes the basketball team's manager...
As Mayo gets involved in Aoba's life, she develops feelings for him. Although she didn't plan on telling Aoba, her feelings get the best of her and she lets it slip out. However, Aoba responds by telling her that he "can't reciprocate anyone's expectations of kindness..."

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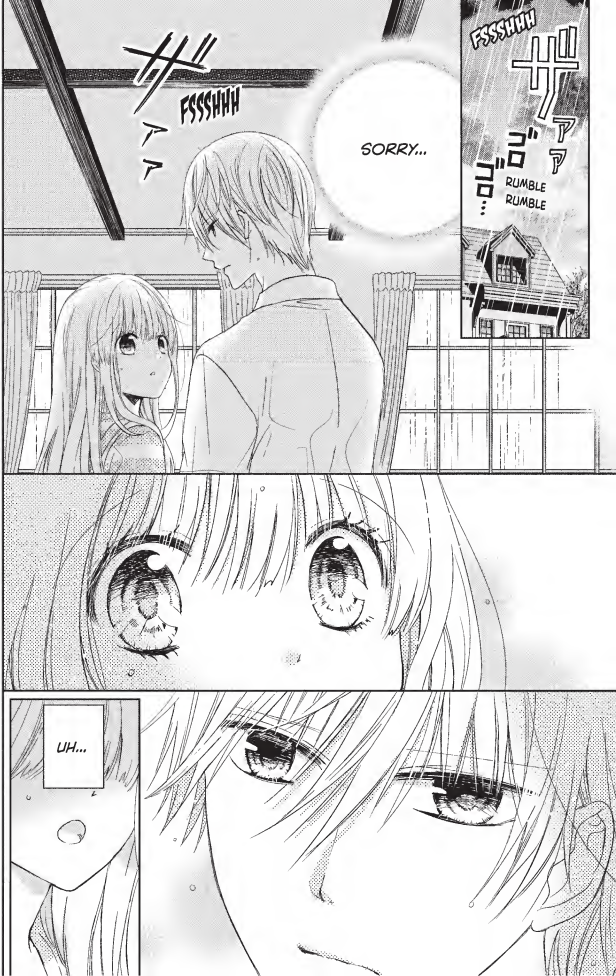
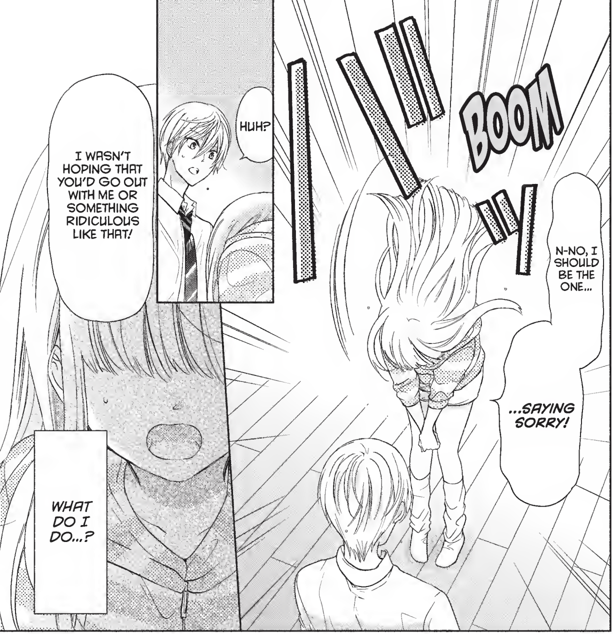
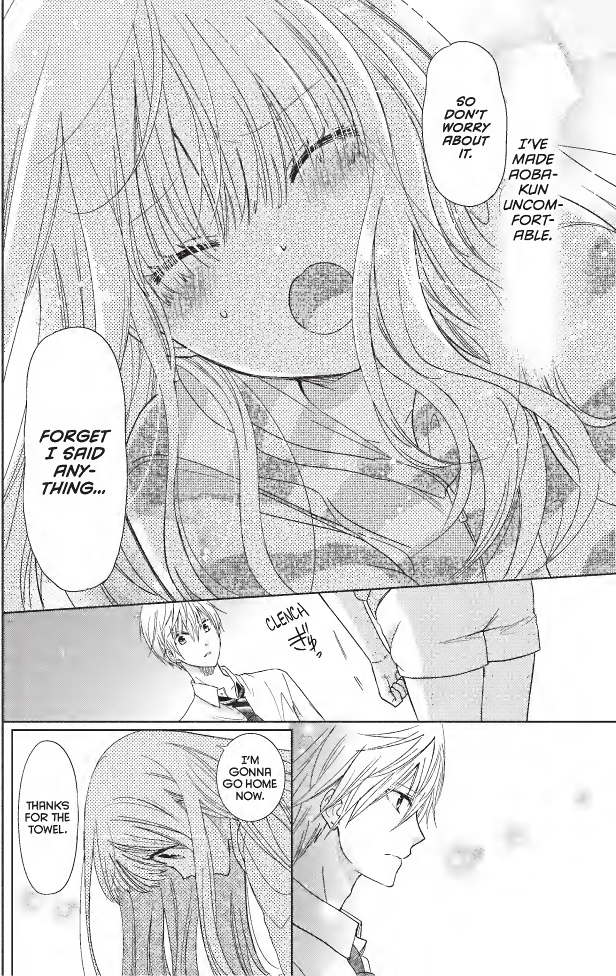
Time.9

IT'S THE FIRST TIME.


FSSSHH
ザァァ
ゴロゴロ…
RUMBLE RUMBLE
ザァァ
FSSSHH
SORRY...
UH...

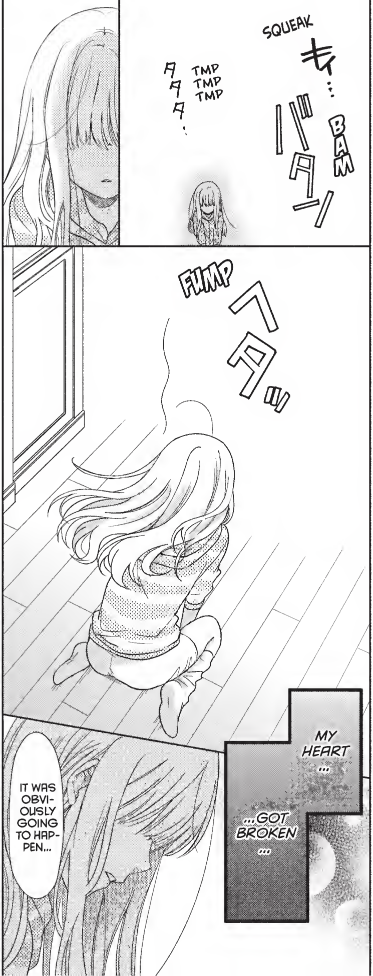

I WASN'T HOPING THAT YOU'D GO OUT WITH ME OR SOMETHING RIDICULOUS LIKE THAT!
WHAT DO I DO...?
HUH?
BOOM
N-NO, I SHOULD BE THE ONE...
...SAYING SORRY!

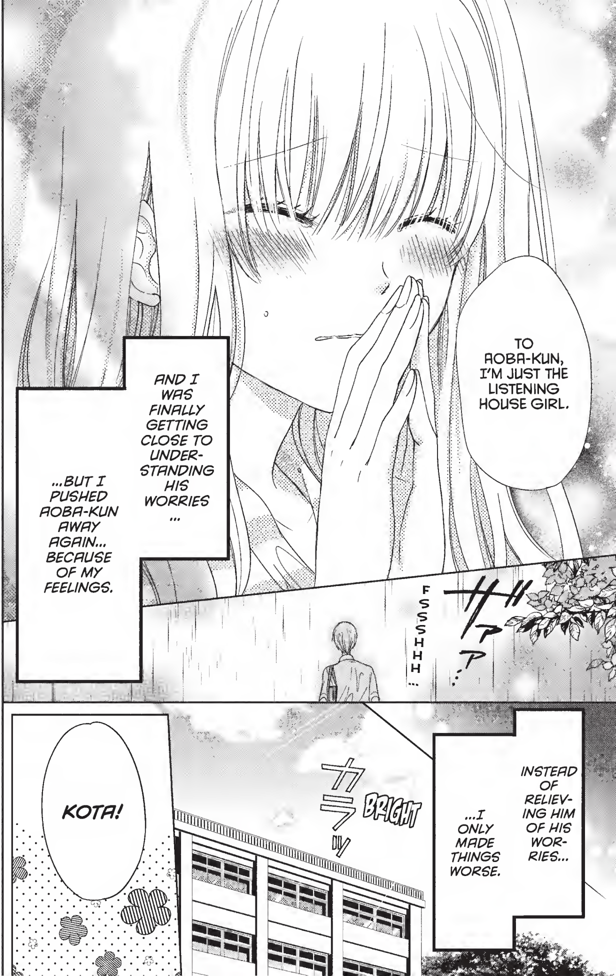
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

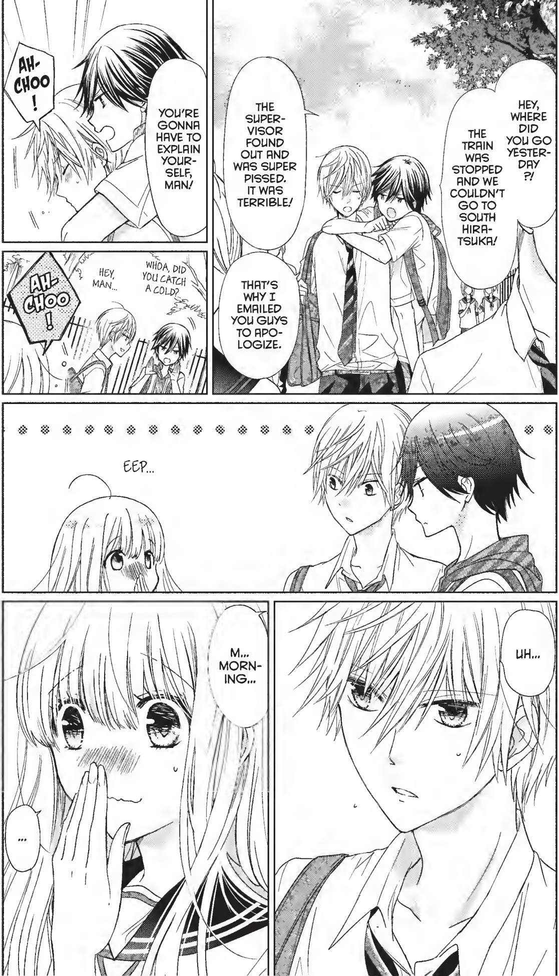

I'VE MADE AOBA-KUN UNCOMFORTABLE.
SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
FORGET I SAID ANYTHING...
CLENCH
ぎゅっ
I'M GONNA GO HOME NOW.
THANKS FOR THE TOWEL.

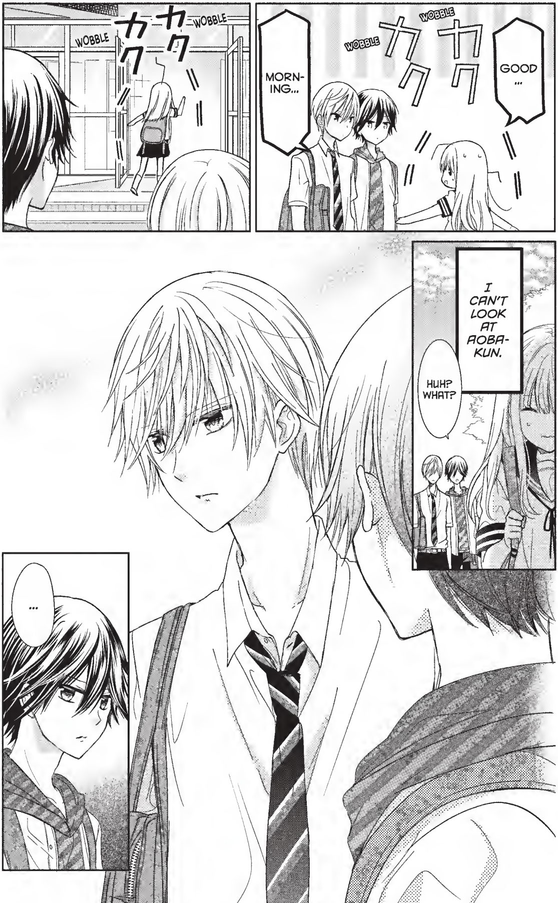
HELLO! THIS IS EMA TOYAMA. THANKS FOR READING AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSION VOLUME 3! THE CHARACTER PROFILE USUALLY GOES HERE, BUT ALL THE CHARACTERS HAVE BEEN PROFILED ALREADY... SO I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO PUT HERE. SINCE THIS IS A MANGA ABOUT A LISTENING HOUSE, I DECIDED TO MAKE THIS SPACE A "PLEASE LISTEN TO MY (RATHER TRIVIAL) STORIES!!" SECTION. I'M GOING TO PUT TRIVIAL STUFF HERE, SO DON'T MIND ME. BUT IF YOU DO READ IT, THANKS! ALTHOUGH I'LL PROBABLY REGRET MOST OF THE STUFF I WRITE HERE IF I READ IT BACK YEARS LATER... THE IDLE TALK KINDA STUFF...

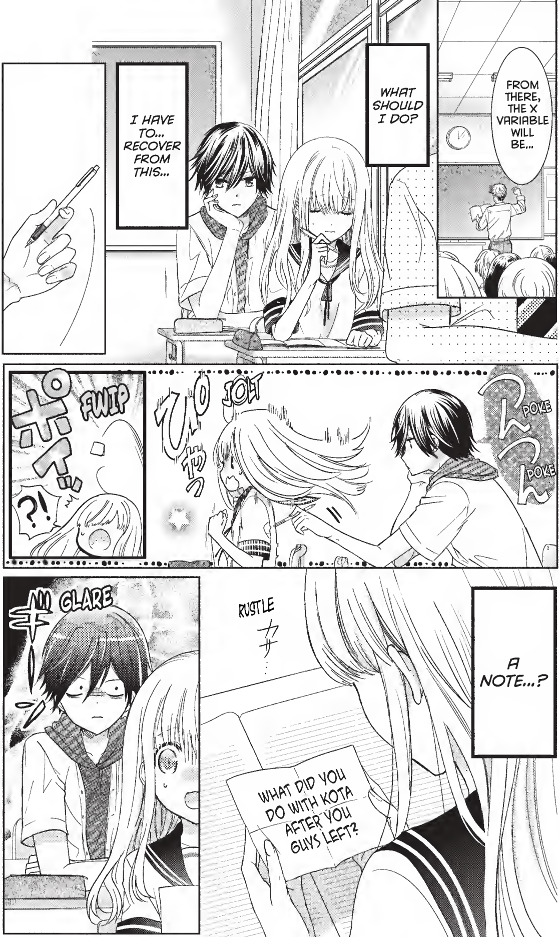
WHY DID I WRITE THIS?
5 YEARS LATER...

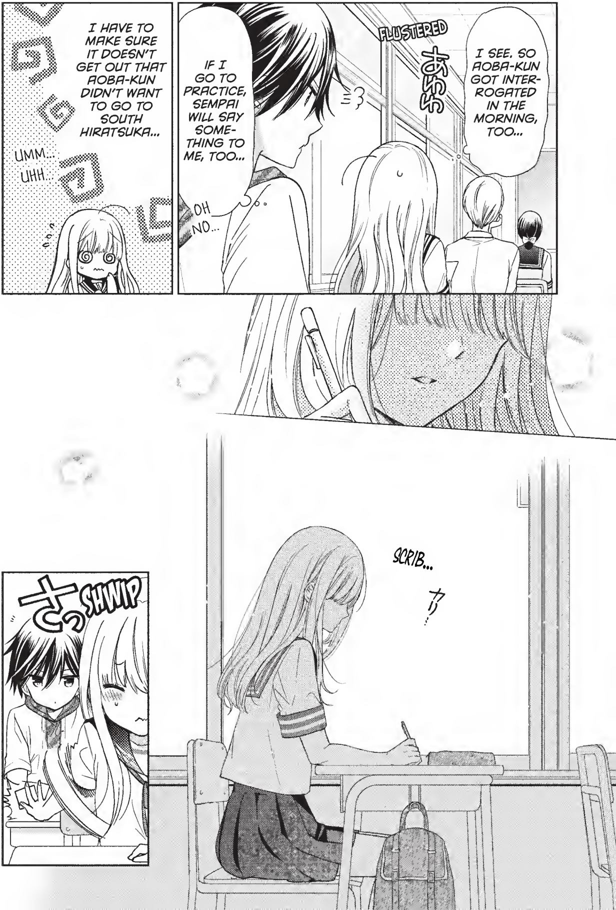

SQUEAK
キィ…
BAM
バタン
TMP TMP TMP
タタタ…
FUMP
ヘタッ
MY HEART...
...GOT BROKEN...
IT WAS OBVIOUSLY GOING TO HAPPEN...

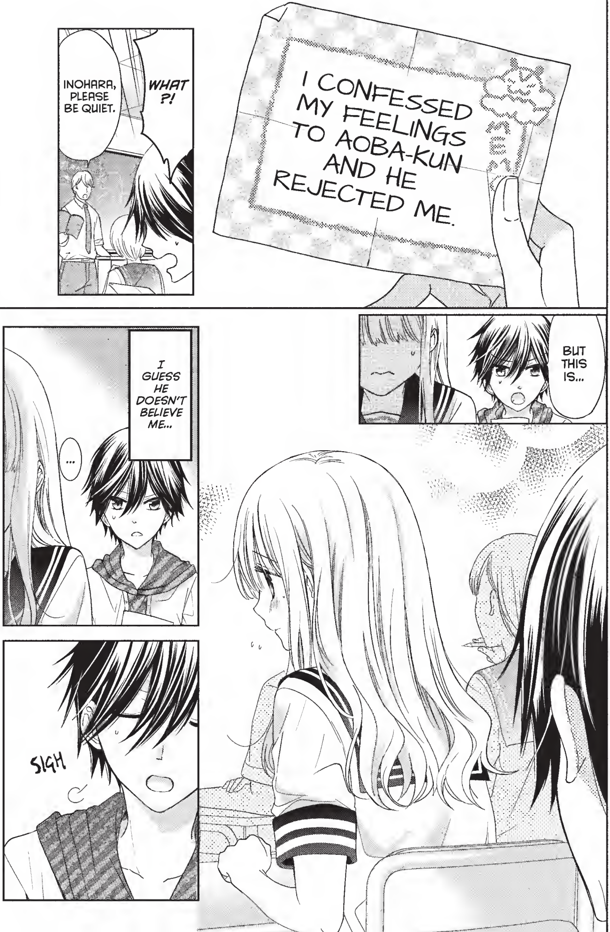

TO AOBA-KUN, I'M JUST THE LISTENING HOUSE GIRL.
AND I WAS FINALLY GETTING CLOSE TO UNDERSTANDING HIS WORRIES...
...BUT I PUSHED AOBA-KUN AWAY AGAIN... BECAUSE OF MY FEELINGS.
ザァァ…
FSSSHHH...
INSTEAD OF RELIEVING HIM OF HIS WORRIES...
...I ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE.
カラッ
BRIGHT
KOTA!

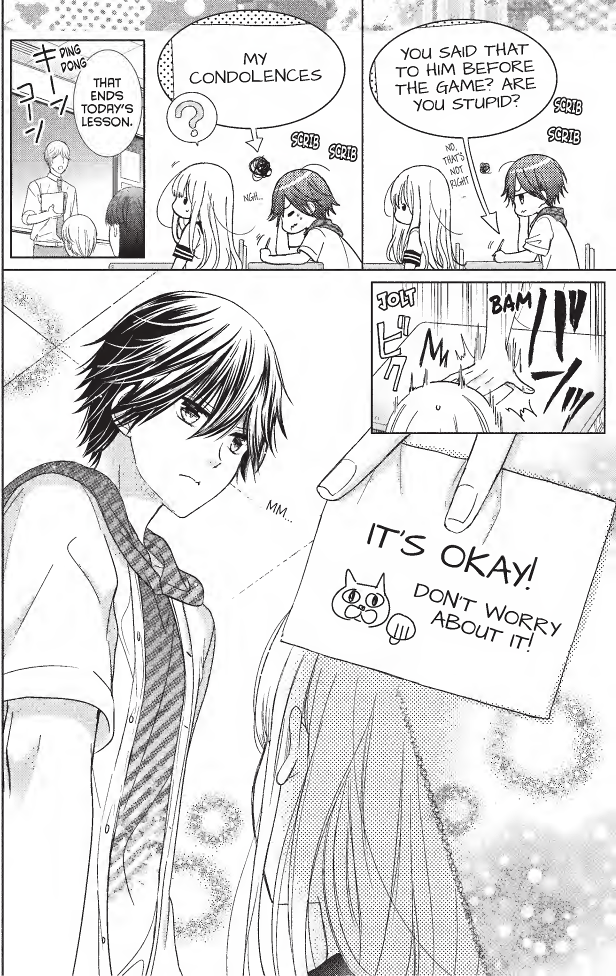

HEY, WHERE DID YOU GO YESTERDAY?!
THE TRAIN WAS STOPPED AND WE COULDN'T GO TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA!
THE SUPERVISOR FOUND OUT AND WAS SUPER PISSED. IT WAS TERRIBLE!
THAT'S WHY I EMAILED YOU GUYS TO APOLOGIZE.
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO EXPLAIN YOURSELF, MAN!
AH-CHOO!
WHOA, DID YOU CATCH A COLD?
HEY, MAN...
AH-CHOO!
EEP...
UH...
M... MORNING...
...

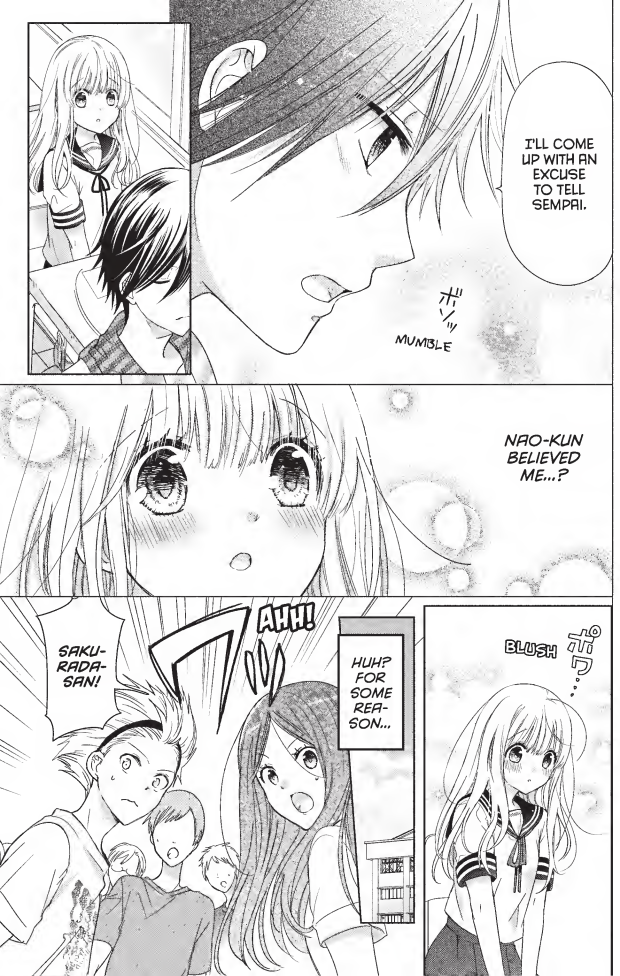

GOOD ...
カク
カク
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
MORNING...
カク
カク
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
I CAN'T LOOK AT AOBA-KUN.
HUH? WHAT?
...

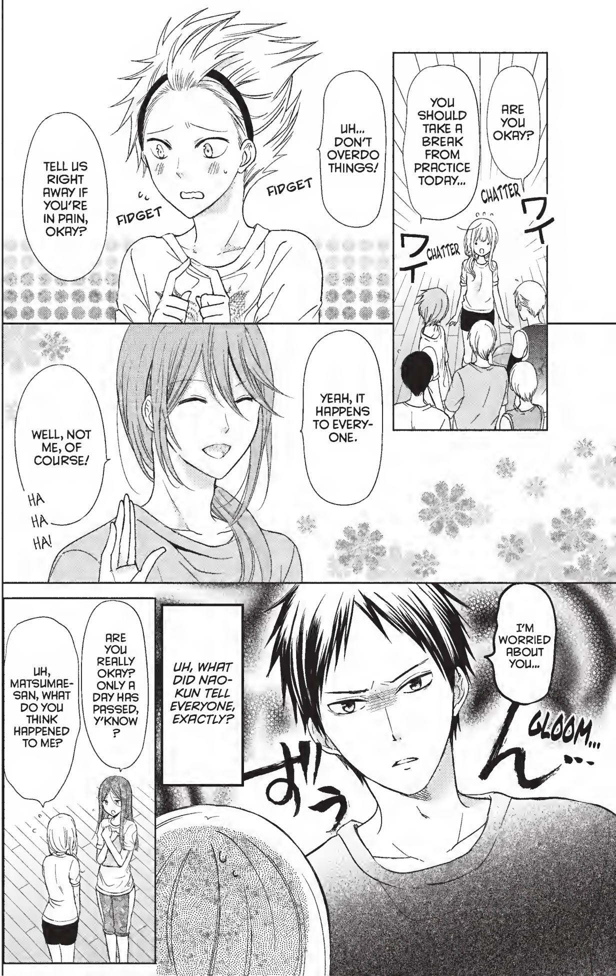

FROM THERE, THE X VARIABLE WILL BE...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I HAVE TO... RECOVER FROM THIS...
つんつん
POKE POKE
ぴゃっ
JOLT
?!
ポイッ
FWIP
A NOTE...?
カサ
RUSTLE
WHAT DID YOU DO WITH KOTA AFTER YOU GUYS LEFT?
ギッ
GLARE

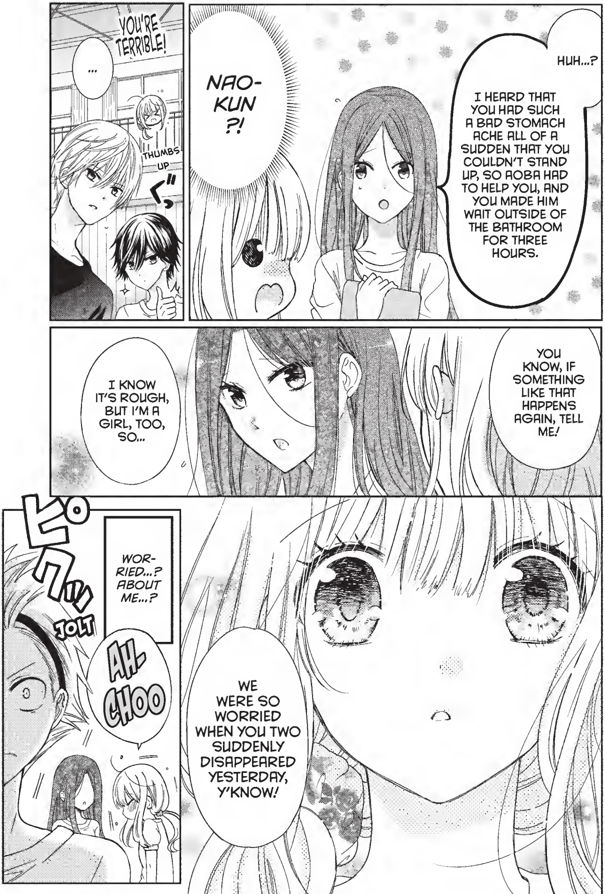

I SEE. SO AOBA-KUN GOT INTERROGATED IN THE MORNING, TOO...
FLUSTERED
あわわ
IF I GO TO PRACTICE, SEMPAI WILL SAY SOMETHING TO ME, TOO...
OH NO...
I HAVE TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T GET OUT THAT AOBA-KUN DIDN'T WANT TO GO TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA...
UMM... UHH...
SCRIB...
カリ…
さっ
SHWIP

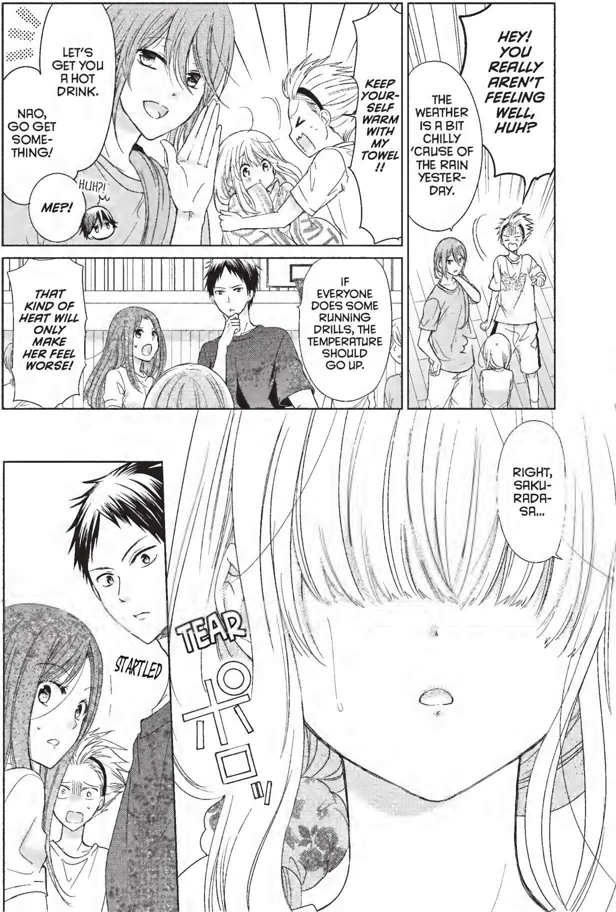

I CONFESSED MY FEELINGS TO AOBA-KUN AND HE REJECTED ME.
WHAT?!
INOHARA, PLEASE BE QUIET.
BUT THIS IS...
I GUESS HE DOESN'T BELIEVE ME...
...
SIGH

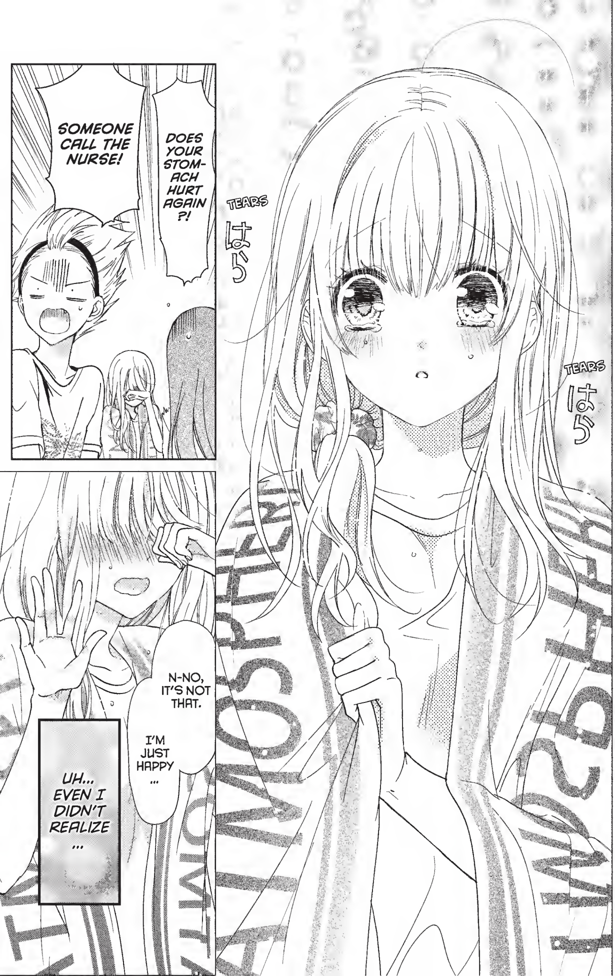

YOU SAID THAT TO HIM BEFORE THE GAME? ARE YOU STUPID?
SCRIB
SCRIB
NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT ...
MY CONDOLENCES
?
SCRIB
SCRIB
NGH..
DING DONG
THAT ENDS TODAY'S LESSON.
BAM
JOLT
MM...
IT'S OKAY!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!

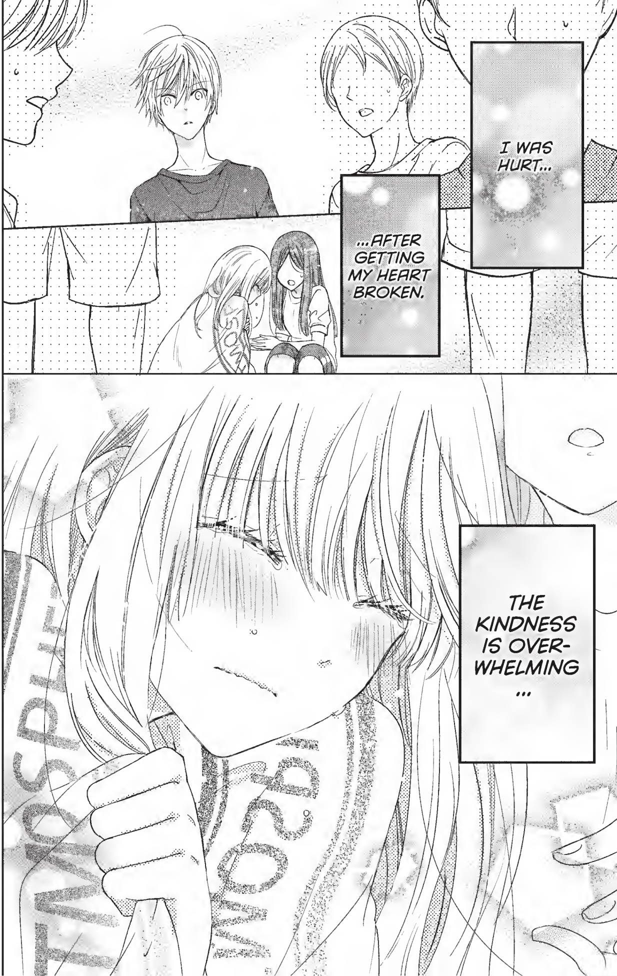

I'LL COME UP WITH AN EXCUSE TO TELL SEMPAI.
ボソッ
MUMBLE
NAO-KUN BELIEVED ME...?
ポワ...
BLUSH
HUH? FOR SOME REASON...
AHH!
SAKURADA-SAN!

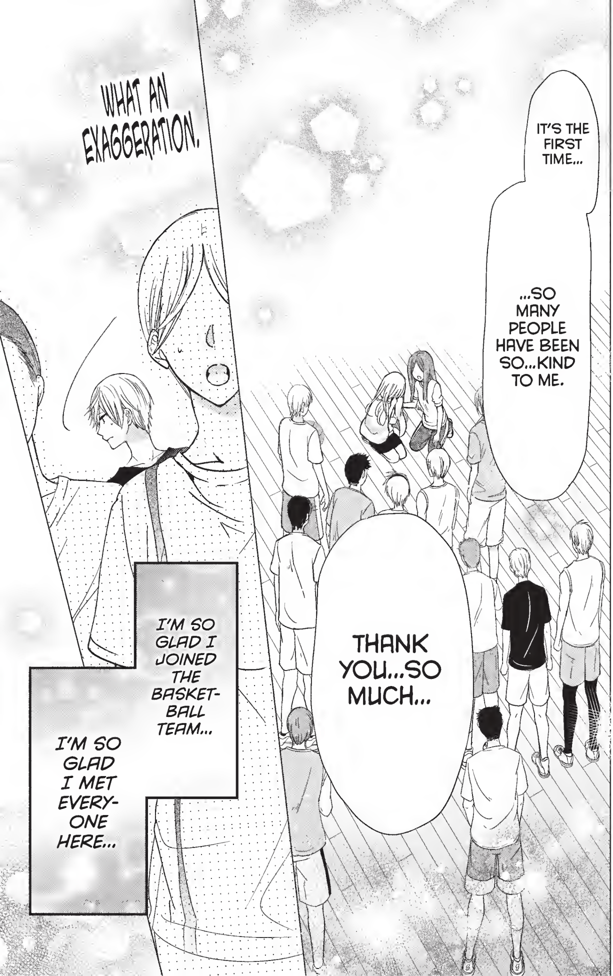

ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK FROM PRACTICE TODAY...
CHATTER
ワイ
ワイ
CHATTER
UH... DON'T OVERDO THINGS!
FIDGET
FIDGET
TELL US RIGHT AWAY IF YOU'RE IN PAIN, OKAY?
YEAH, IT HAPPENS TO EVERYONE.
WELL, NOT ME, OF COURSE!
HA HA HA!
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU...
GLOOM...
ん゛...
ずぅ
UH, WHAT DID NAO-KUN TELL EVERYONE, EXACTLY?
ARE YOU REALLY OKAY? ONLY A DAY HAS PASSED, Y'KNOW?
UH, MATSUMAE-SAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED TO ME?

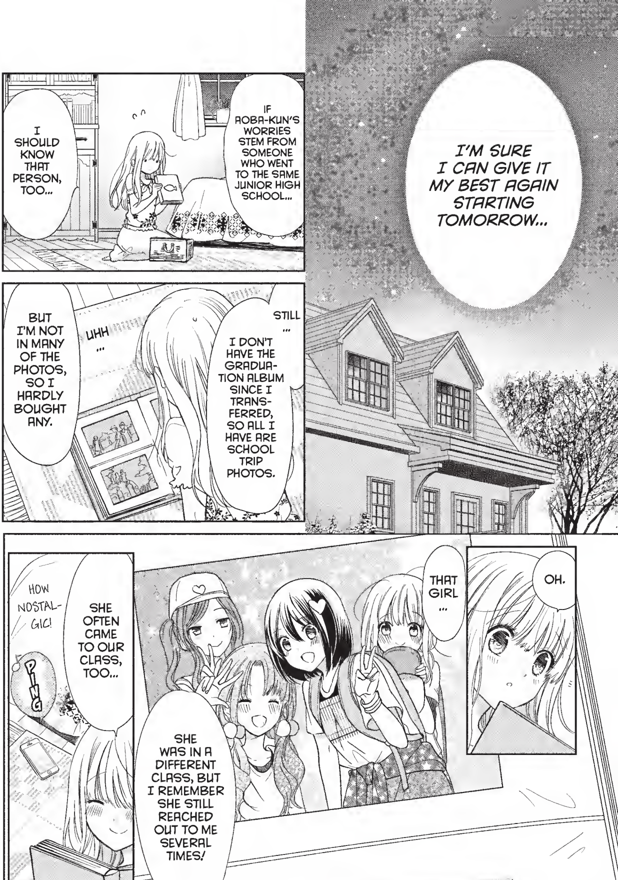

HUH...?
I HEARD THAT YOU HAD SUCH A BAD STOMACH ACHE ALL OF A SUDDEN THAT YOU COULDN'T STAND UP, SO AOBA HAD TO HELP YOU, AND YOU MADE HIM WAIT OUTSIDE OF THE BATHROOM FOR THREE HOURS.
NAO-KUN?!
YOU'RE TERRIBLE!
...
THUMBS UP
YOU KNOW, IF SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENS AGAIN, TELL ME!
I KNOW IT'S ROUGH, BUT I'M A GIRL, TOO, SO...
WE WERE SO WORRIED WHEN YOU TWO SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED YESTERDAY, Y'KNOW!
WORRIED...? ABOUT ME...?
ピクッ
JOLT
AH-CHOO

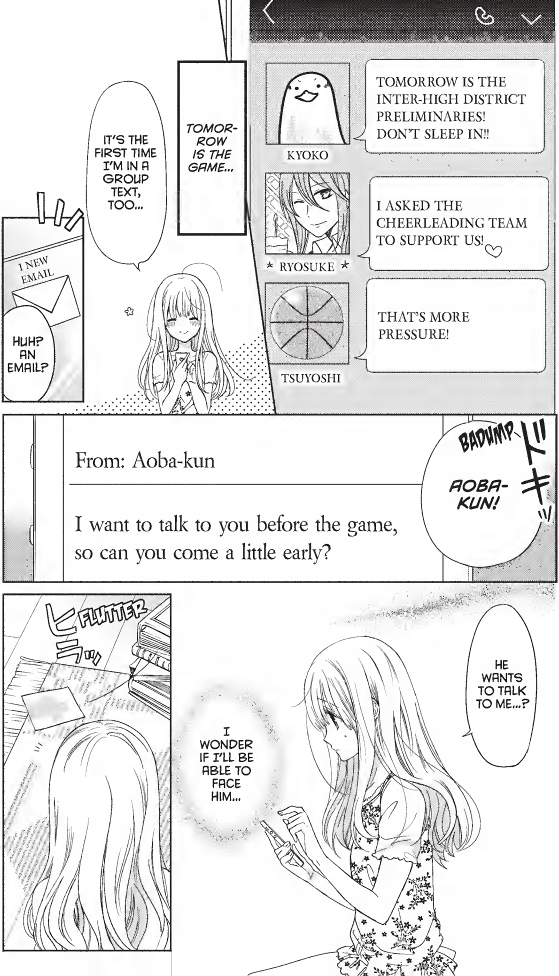

HEY! YOU REALLY AREN'T FEELING WELL, HUH?
THE WEATHER IS A BIT CHILLY 'CAUSE OF THE RAIN YESTERDAY.
KEEP YOURSELF WARM WITH MY TOWEL!!
LET'S GET YOU A HOT DRINK.
NAO, GO GET SOMETHING!
HUH?!
ME?!
IF EVERYONE DOES SOME RUNNING DRILLS, THE TEMPERATURE SHOULD GO UP.
THAT KIND OF HEAT WILL ONLY MAKE HER FEEL WORSE!
RIGHT, SAKURADA-SA...
TEAR
ポロッ
STARTLED


TEARS はら
TEARS はら
DOES YOUR STOMACH HURT AGAIN?!
SOMEONE CALL THE NURSE!
N-NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
I'M JUST HAPPY...
UH... EVEN I DIDN'T REALIZE...


I WAS HURT...
...AFTER GETTING MY HEART BROKEN.
THE KINDNESS IS OVERWHELMING ...


IT'S THE FIRST TIME...
...SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SO...KIND TO ME.
THANK YOU...SO MUCH...
WHAT AN EXAGGERATION.
I'M SO GLAD I JOINED THE BASKETBALL TEAM...
I'M SO GLAD I MET EVERYONE HERE...


I'M SURE I CAN GIVE IT MY BEST AGAIN STARTING TOMORROW...
IF AOBA-KUN'S WORRIES STEM FROM SOMEONE WHO WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL...
I SHOULD KNOW THAT PERSON, TOO...
STILL...
I DON'T HAVE THE GRADUATION ALBUM SINCE I TRANSFERRED, SO ALL I HAVE ARE SCHOOL TRIP PHOTOS.
UHH...
BUT I'M NOT IN MANY OF THE PHOTOS, SO I HARDLY BOUGHT ANY.
OH.
THAT GIRL...
HOW NOSTALGIC!
SHE OFTEN CAME TO OUR CLASS, TOO...
SHE WAS IN A DIFFERENT CLASS, BUT I REMEMBER SHE STILL REACHED OUT TO ME SEVERAL TIMES!
PING



KYOKO
TOMORROW IS THE INTER-HIGH DISTRICT PRELIMINARIES! DON'T SLEEP IN!!

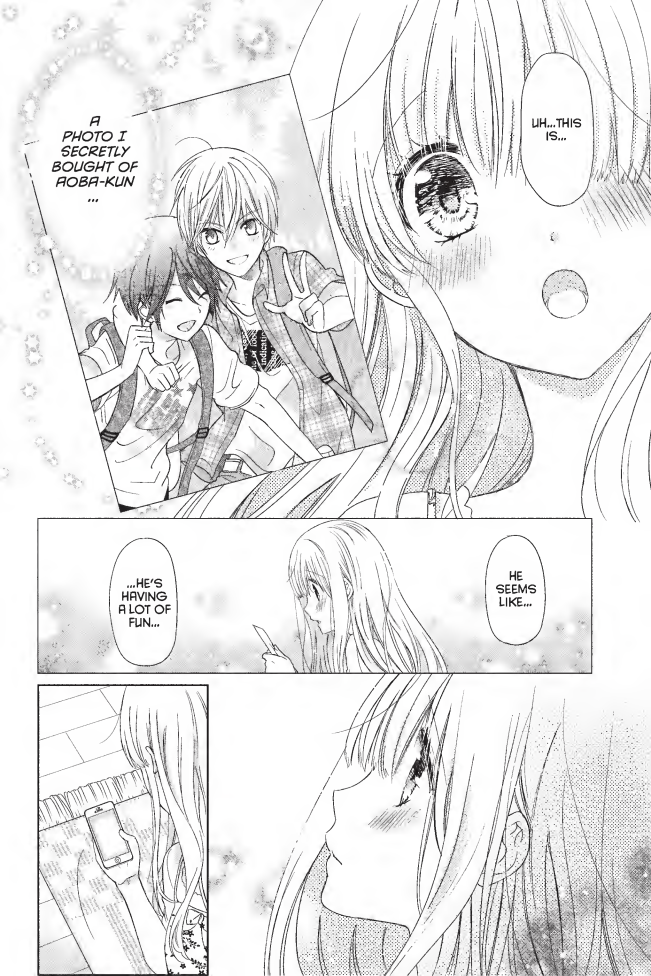
⋆ RYOSUKE ⋆
I ASKED THE CHEERLEADING TEAM TO SUPPORT US! ♡

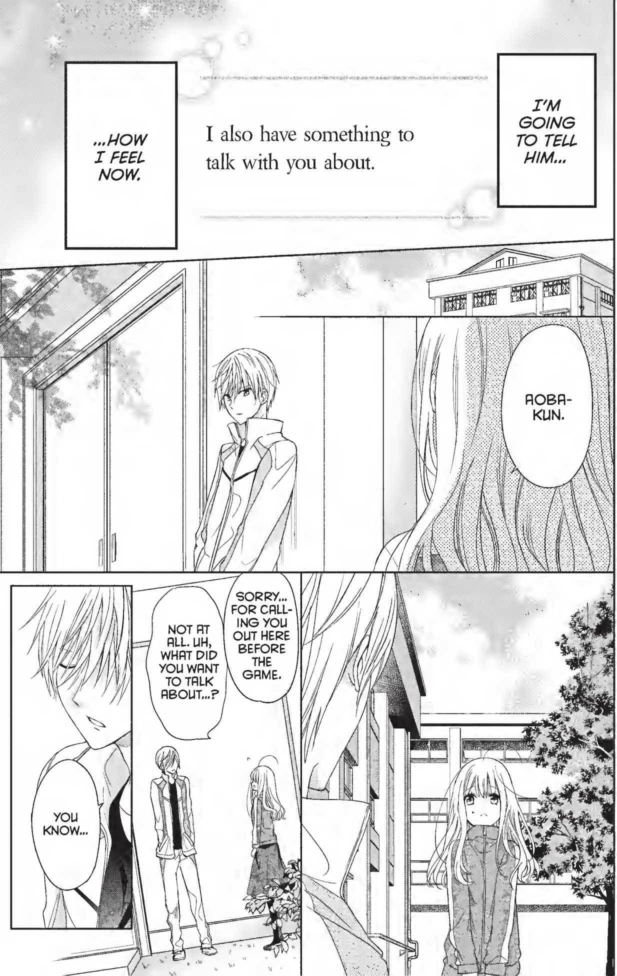
TSUYOSHI
THAT'S MORE PRESSURE!

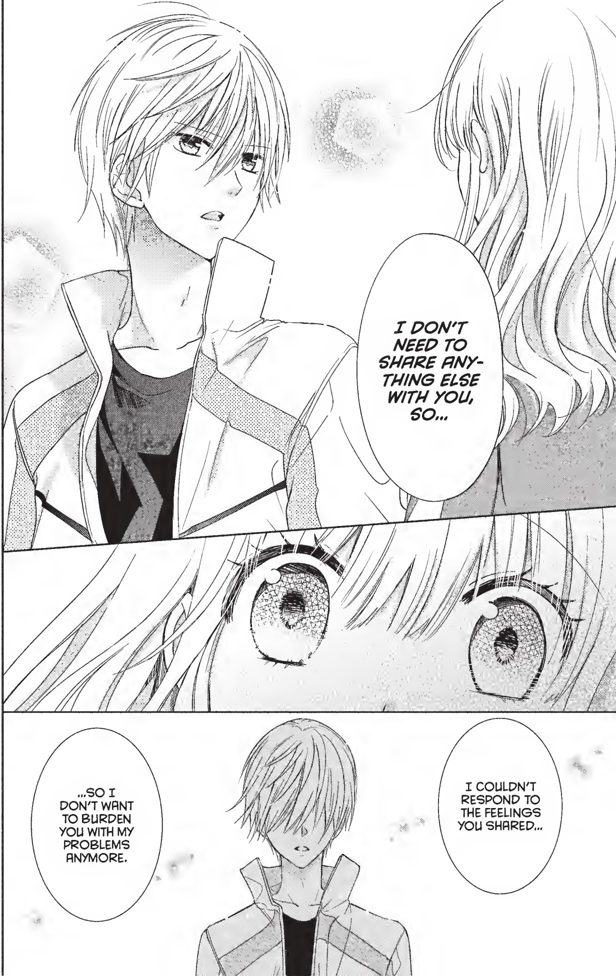
From: Aoba-kun

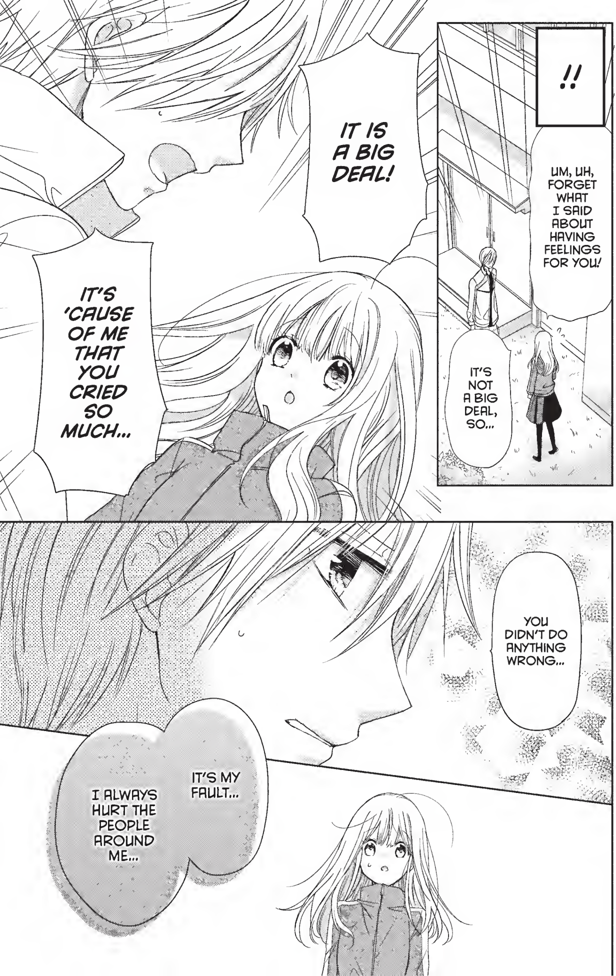
I want to talk to you before the game, so can you come a little early?

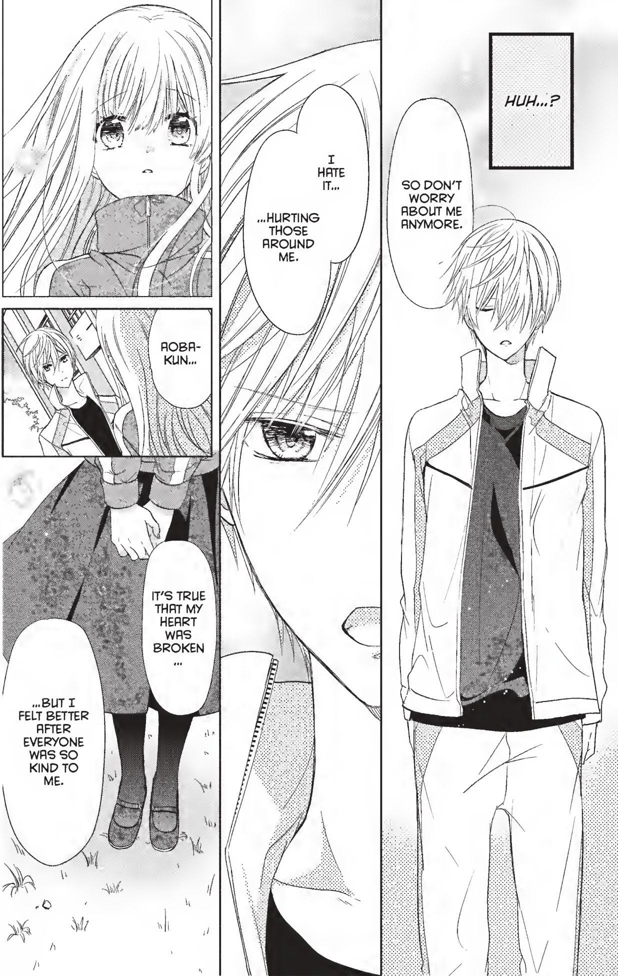
TOMORROW IS THE GAME...
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'M IN A GROUP TEXT, TOO...
1 NEW EMAIL
HUH? AN EMAIL?
BADUMP
AOBA-KUN!
HE WANTS TO TALK TO ME...?
I WONDER IF I'LL BE ABLE TO FACE HIM...
FLUTTER

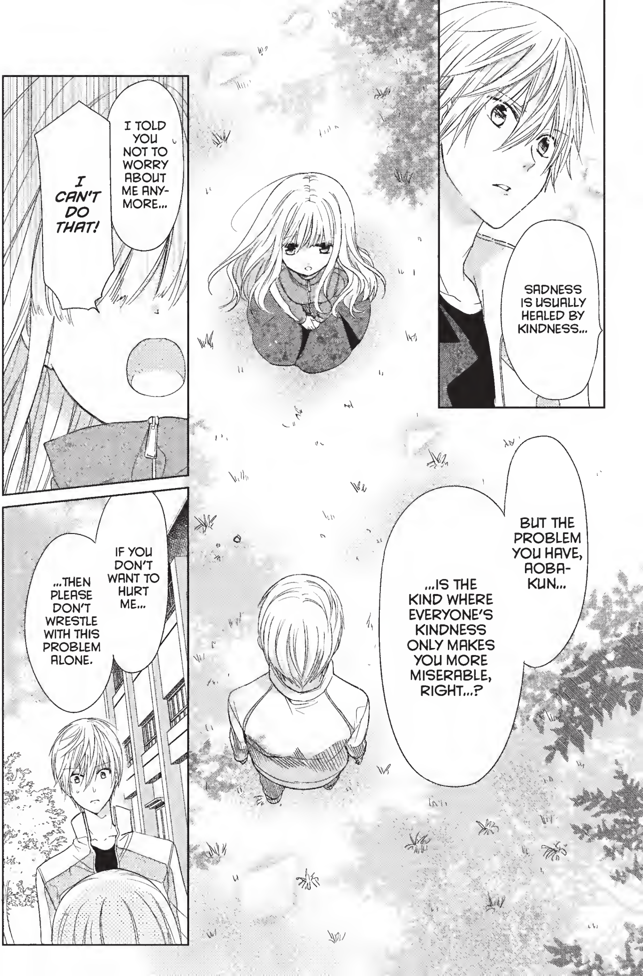

UH...THIS IS...
A PHOTO I SECRETLY BOUGHT OF AOBA-KUN...
HE SEEMS LIKE...
...HE'S HAVING A LOT OF FUN...

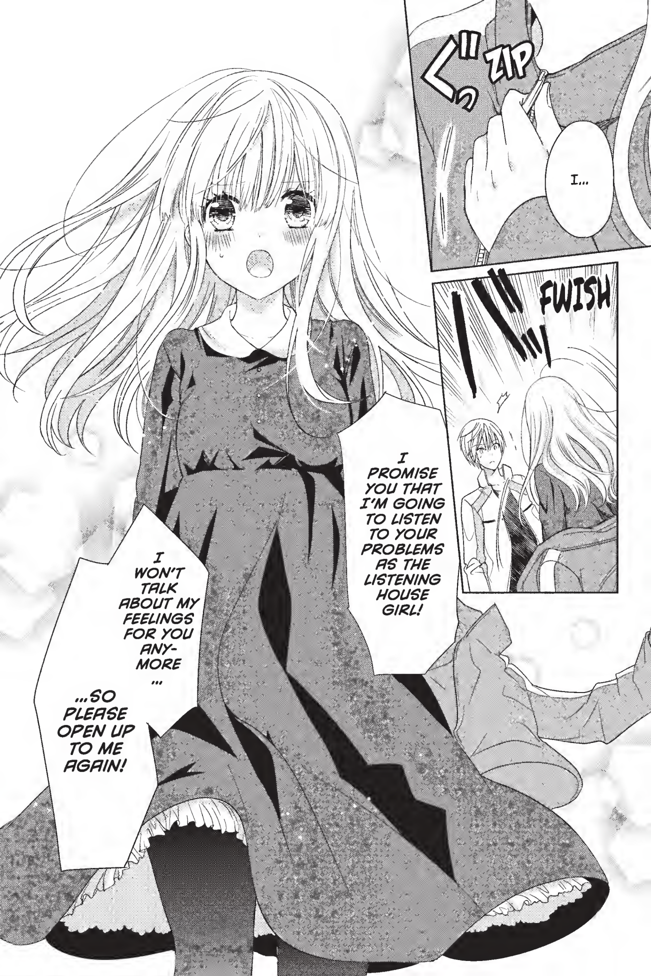

I'M GOING TO TELL HIM...
I also have something to talk with you about.
...HOW I FEEL NOW.
AOBA-KUN.
SORRY... FOR CALLING YOU OUT HERE BEFORE THE GAME.
NOT AT ALL. UH, WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT...?
YOU KNOW...

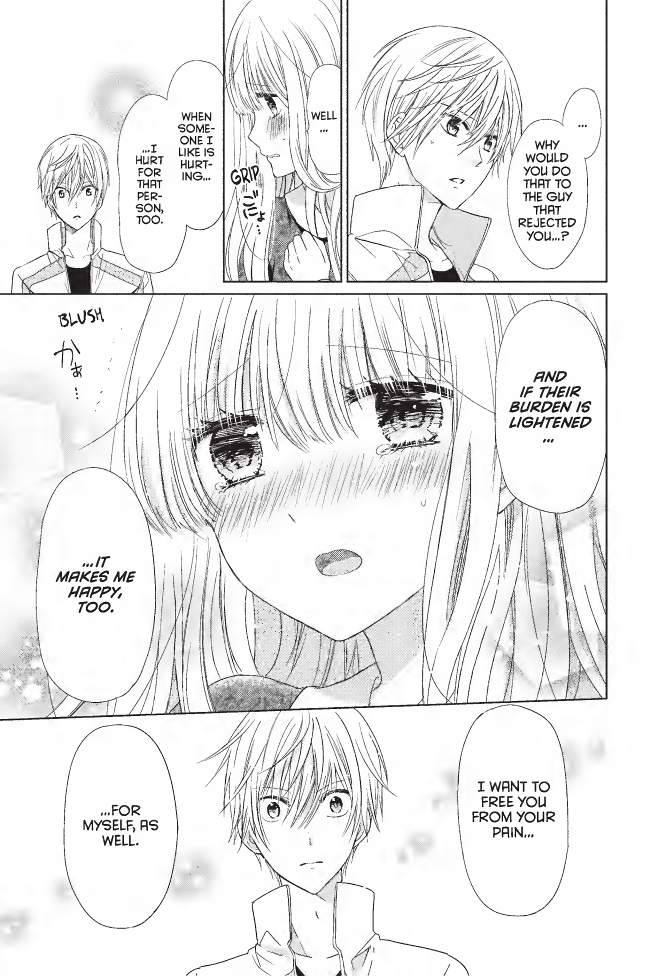

I DON'T NEED TO SHARE ANYTHING ELSE WITH YOU, SO...
I COULDN'T RESPOND TO THE FEELINGS YOU SHARED...
...SO I DON'T WANT TO BURDEN YOU WITH MY PROBLEMS ANYMORE.

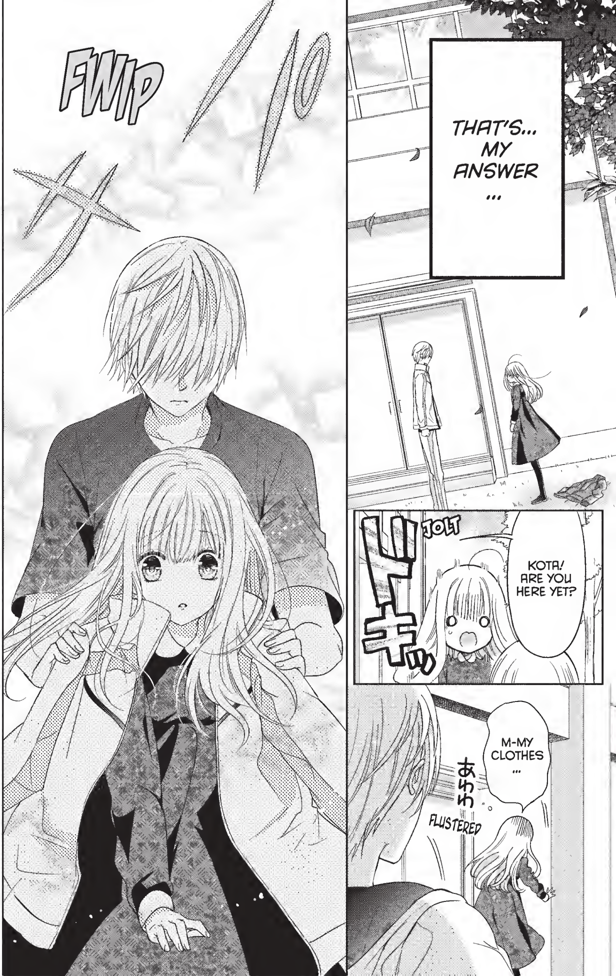

!!
UM, UH, FORGET WHAT I SAID ABOUT HAVING FEELINGS FOR YOU!
IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL, SO...
IT IS A BIG DEAL!
IT'S 'CAUSE OF ME THAT YOU CRIED SO MUCH...
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG...
IT'S MY FAULT...
I ALWAYS HURT THE PEOPLE AROUND ME...

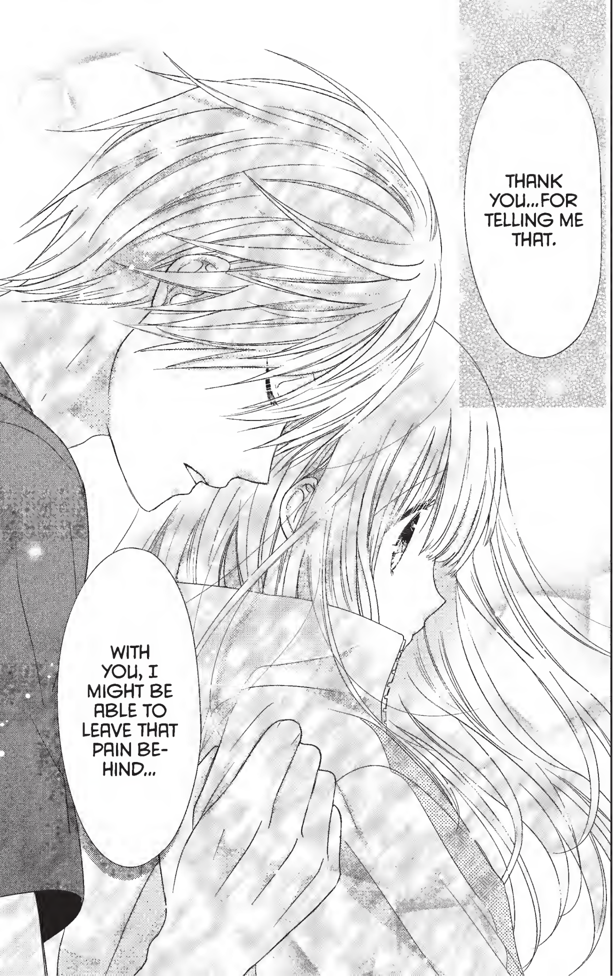

HUH...?
SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME ANYMORE.
I HATE IT...
...HURTING THOSE AROUND ME.
AOBA-KUN...
IT'S TRUE THAT MY HEART WAS BROKEN...
...BUT I FELT BETTER AFTER EVERYONE WAS SO KIND TO ME.

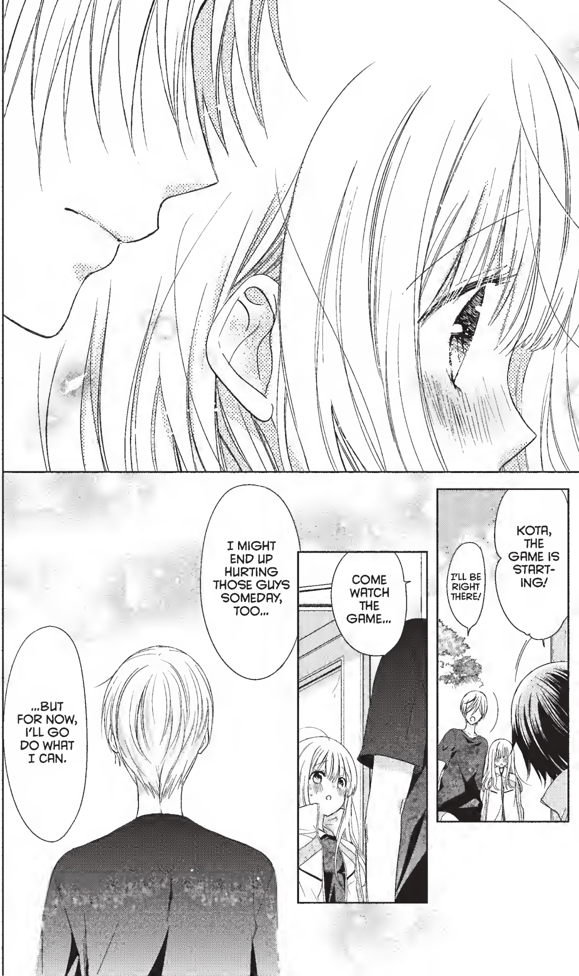

SADNESS IS USUALLY HEALED BY KINDNESS...
I TOLD YOU NOT TO WORRY ABOUT ME ANYMORE...
I CAN'T DO THAT!
BUT THE PROBLEM YOU HAVE, AOBA-KUN...
...IS THE KIND WHERE EVERYONE'S KINDNESS ONLY MAKES YOU MORE MISERABLE, RIGHT...?
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO HURT ME...
...THEN PLEASE DON'T WRESTLE WITH THIS PROBLEM ALONE.

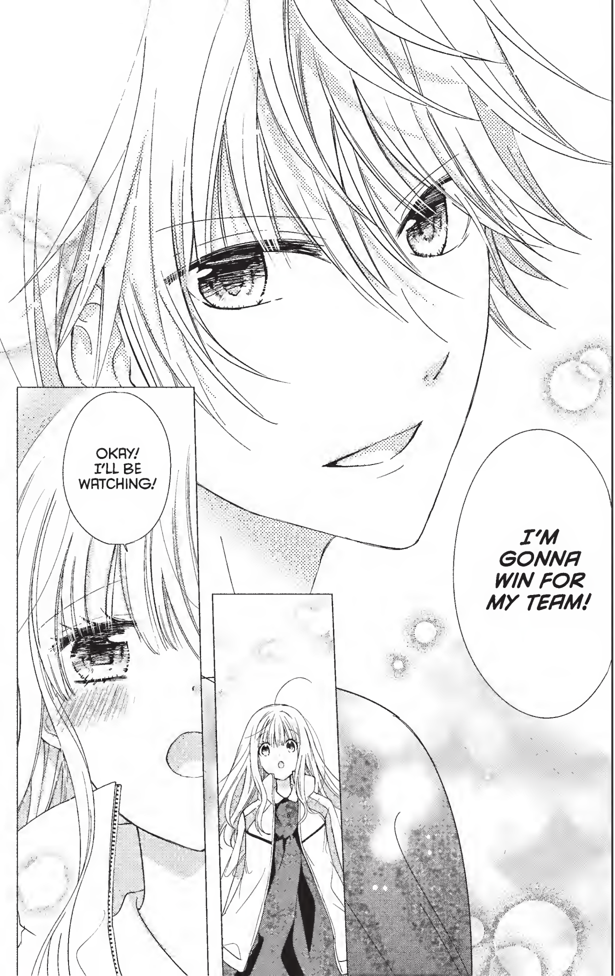

ぐっ
ZIP
I...
FWISH
I PROMISE YOU THAT I'M GOING TO LISTEN TO YOUR PROBLEMS AS THE LISTENING HOUSE GIRL!
I WON'T TALK ABOUT MY FEELINGS FOR YOU ANYMORE...
...SO PLEASE OPEN UP TO ME AGAIN!

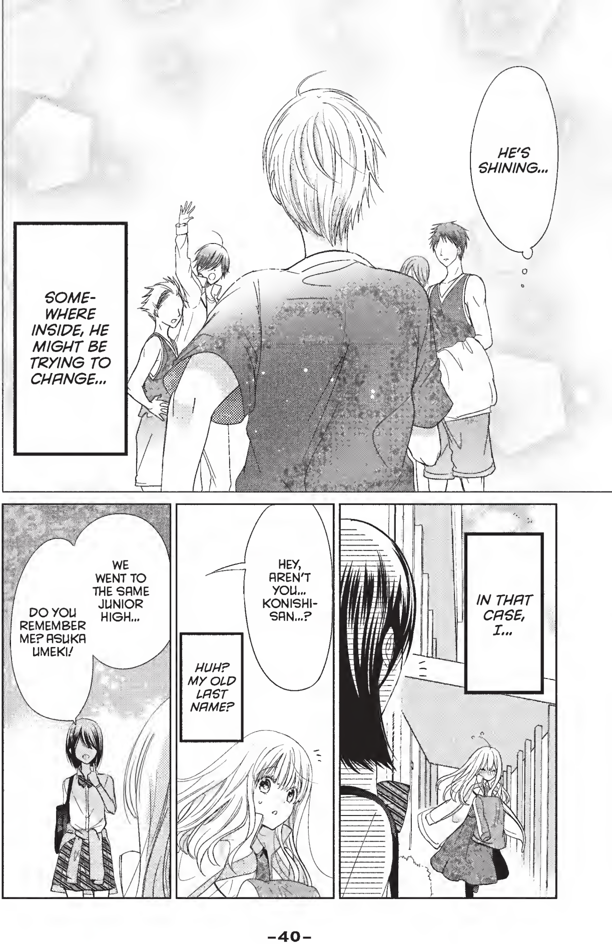

...
WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT TO THE GUY THAT REJECTED YOU...?
WELL ...
GRIP
ごにょ...
WHEN SOMEONE I LIKE IS HURTING...
...I HURT FOR THAT PERSON, TOO.
AND IF THEIR BURDEN IS LIGHTENED ...
BLUSH
かぁ...
...IT MAKES ME HAPPY, TOO.
I WANT TO FREE YOU FROM YOUR PAIN...
...FOR MYSELF, AS WELL.

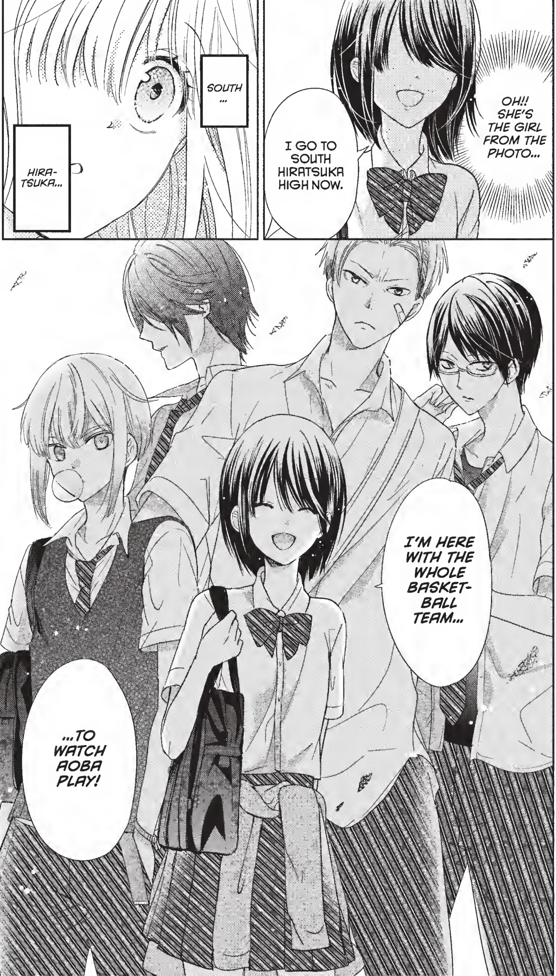

THAT'S... MY ANSWER ...
ドキッ
JOLT
KOTA! ARE YOU HERE YET?
M-MY CLOTHES ...
あわわ
FLUSTERED
FWIP


THANK YOU...FOR TELLING ME THAT.
WITH YOU, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO LEAVE THAT PAIN BEHIND...


KOTA, THE GAME IS STARTING!
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
COME WATCH THE GAME...
I MIGHT END UP HURTING THOSE GUYS SOMEDAY, TOO...
...BUT FOR NOW, I'LL GO DO WHAT I CAN.


I'M GONNA WIN FOR MY TEAM!
OKAY! I'LL BE WATCHING!

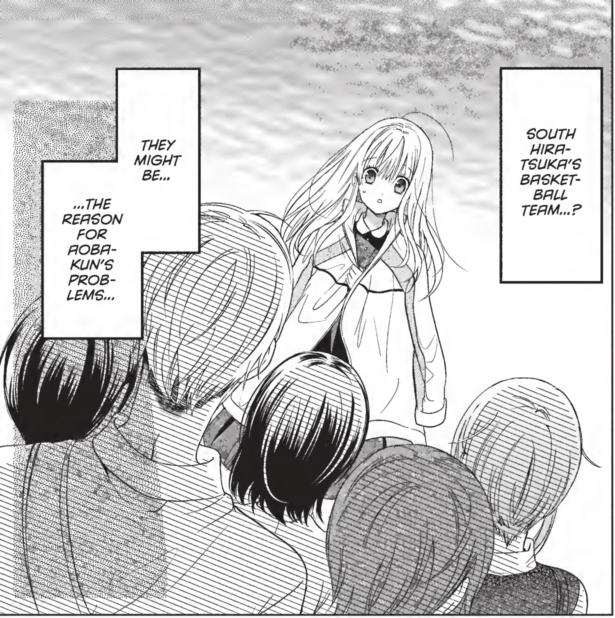

HE'S SHINING...
SOMEWHERE INSIDE, HE MIGHT BE TRYING TO CHANGE...
IN THAT CASE, I...
HEY, AREN'T YOU... KONISHI-SAN...?
HUH? MY OLD LAST NAME?
WE WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH...
DO YOU REMEMBER ME? ASUKA UMEKI!


OH!! SHE'S THE GIRL FROM THE PHOTO...
I GO TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA HIGH NOW.
SOUTH ...
HIRATSUKA...
I'M HERE WITH THE WHOLE BASKETBALL TEAM...
...TO WATCH AOBA PLAY!

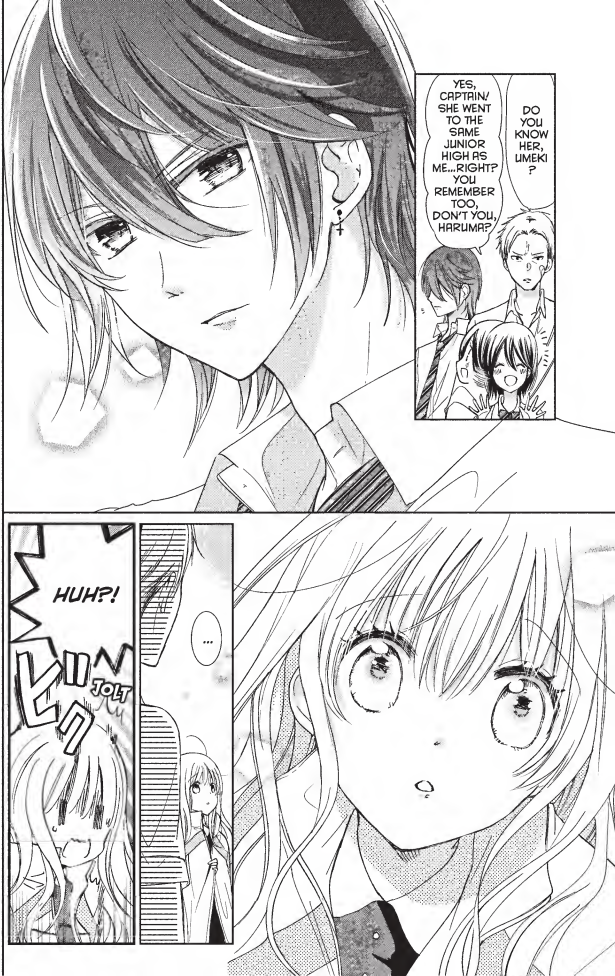
AOBA-KUN'S
CONFESSIONS

Time.10

DO YOUR BEST!

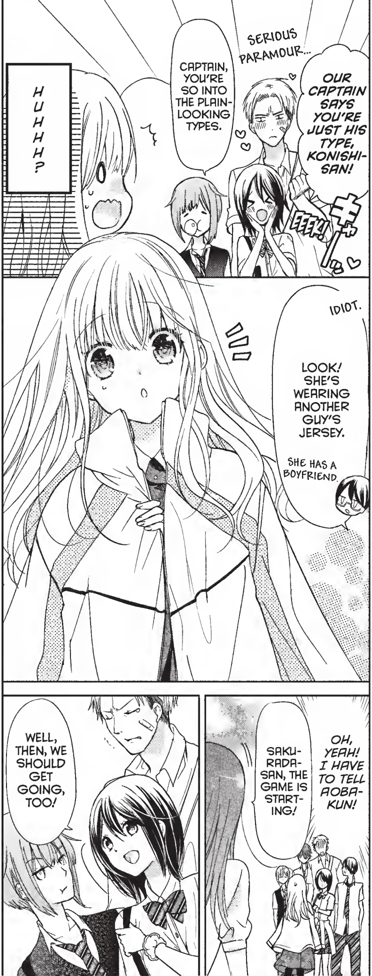

SOUTH HIRA-TSUKA'S BASKET-BALL TEAM...?
THEY MIGHT BE...
...THE REASON FOR AOBA-KUN'S PROB-LEMS...

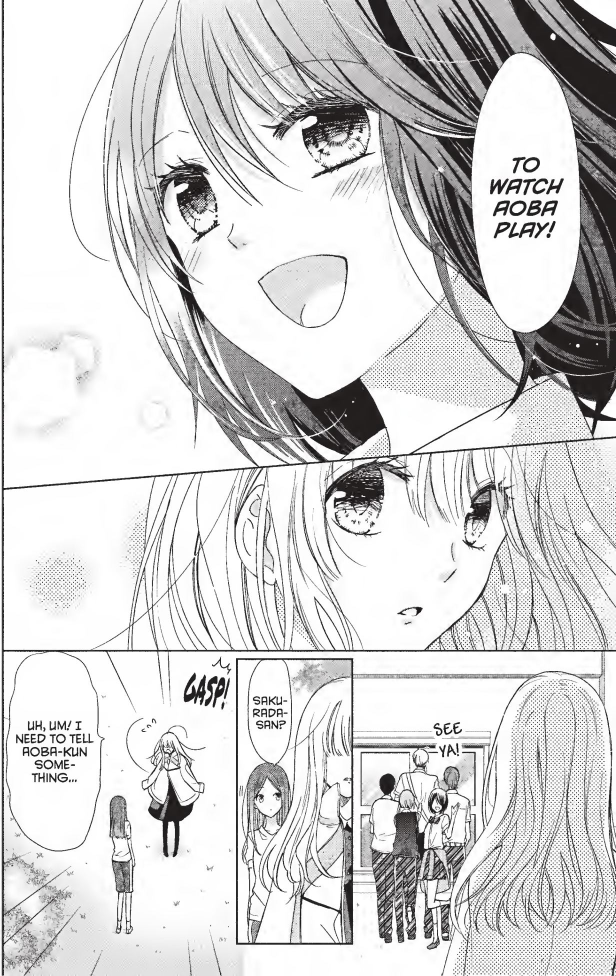
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

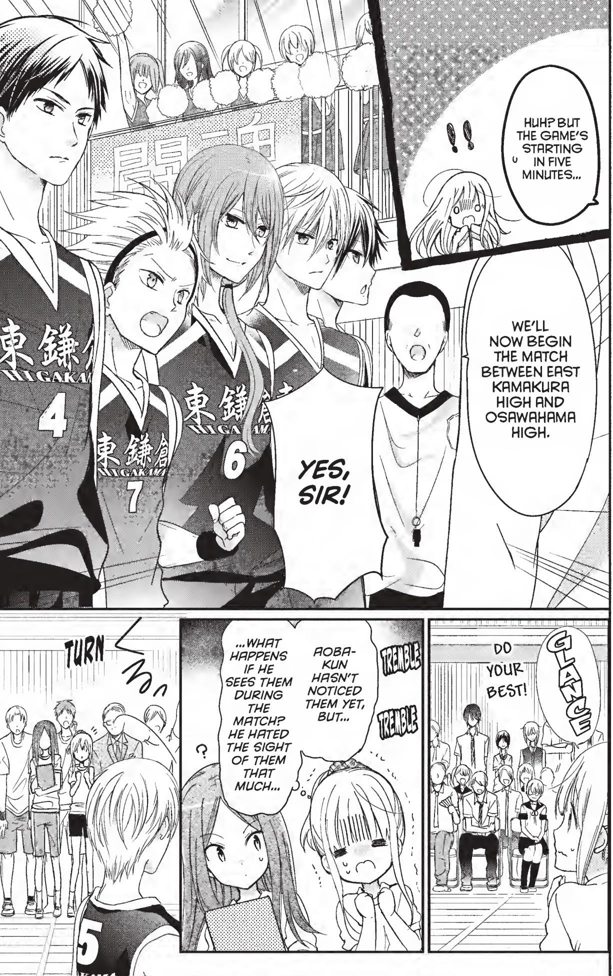

DO YOU KNOW HER, UMEKI?
YES, CAPTAIN! SHE WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH AS ME...RIGHT? YOU REMEMBER TOO, DON'T YOU, HARUMA?
...
HUH?!
ビク
JOLT

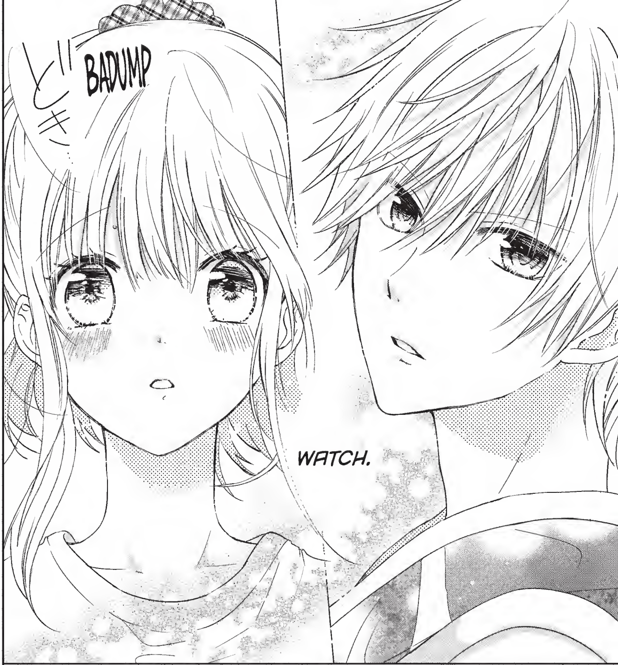
BETWEEN VOLUMES TWO AND THREE, I MOVED CLOSE TO THE MOUNTAINS!! IT MIGHT'VE BEEN BECAUSE IT WAS NEAR THE MOUNTAINS, BUT ***THERE WERE A LOT OF SLOPES!!*** WHEN YOU'RE GOING DOWN THE SLOPE ON A BICYCLE IN PAIRS, IT'S LIKE THAT SCENE FROM THE ANIME, "THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME." I WANT TO LIVE LIFE AVOIDING THOSE SLOPES WHEN POSSIBLE... >.<" STILL, THERE ARE SLOPES EVERYWHERE, SO I WANT AN ELECTRIC BIKE... BUT THEY'RE SO EXPENSIVE... I WONDER IF IT'S A WASTE OF MONEY, SINCE ALL I EVER DO IS DRAW MANGA. I WANT TO AT LEAST TAKE ONE FOR A SPIN, BUT CAN I EVEN DO SUCH A THING?

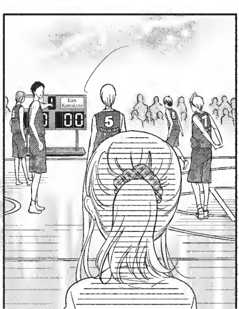
I WONDER... INCIDENTALLY, I DON'T HAVE A LICENSE, EITHER ...

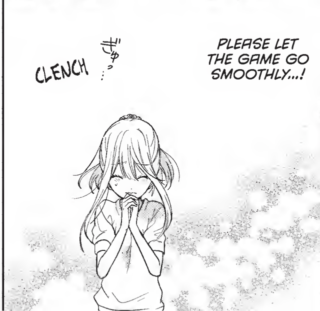

SERIOUS PARAMOUR...
OUR CAPTAIN SAYS YOU'RE JUST HIS TYPE, KONISHI-SAN!
EEEK!
CAPTAIN, YOU'RE SO INTO THE PLAIN-LOOKING TYPES.
HUHHH?
IDIOT.
LOOK! SHE'S WEARING ANOTHER GUY'S JERSEY.
SHE HAS A BOYFRIEND.
OH, YEAH! I HAVE TO TELL AOBA-KUN!
SAKURADA-SAN, THE GAME IS STARTING!
WELL, THEN, WE SHOULD GET GOING, TOO!

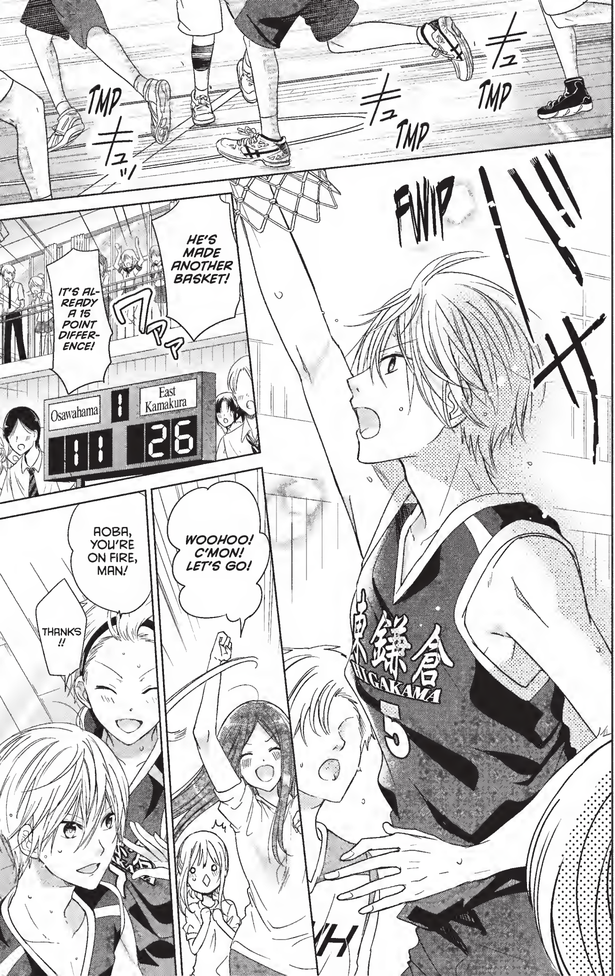

TO WATCH AOBA PLAY!
SEE YA!
SAKURADA-SAN?
GASP!
UH, UM! I NEED TO TELL AOBA-KUN SOMETHING...

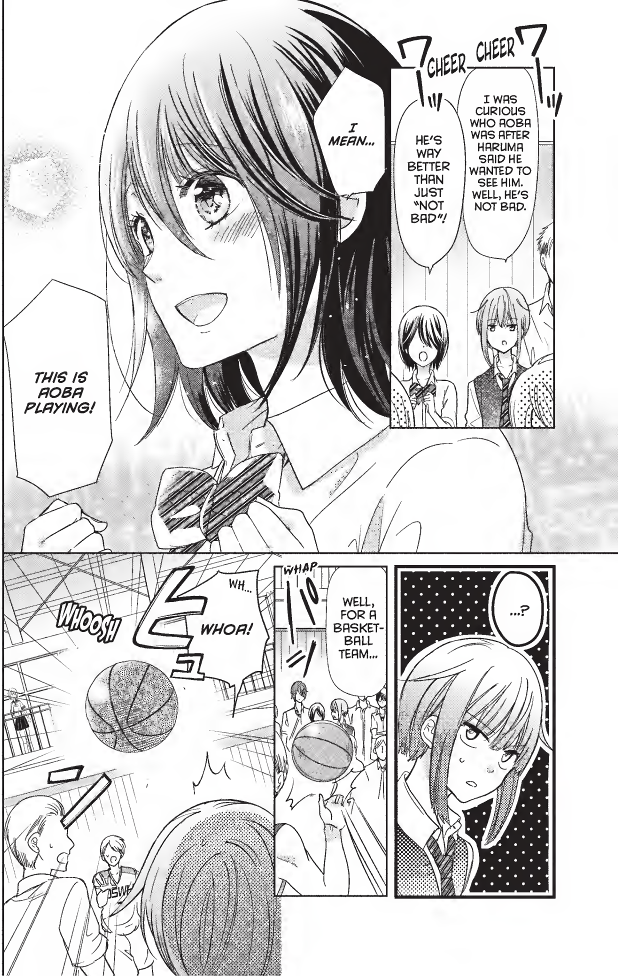

!!
HUH? BUT THE GAME'S STARTING IN FIVE MINUTES...
WE'LL NOW BEGIN THE MATCH BETWEEN EAST KAMAKURA HIGH AND OSAWAHAMA HIGH.
YES, SIR!
東鎌倉
4
7
6
GLANCE
DO YOUR BEST!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
AOBA-KUN HASN'T NOTICED THEM YET, BUT...
...WHAT HAPPENS IF HE SEES THEM DURING THE MATCH? HE HATED THE SIGHT OF THEM THAT MUCH...
?
TURN
5

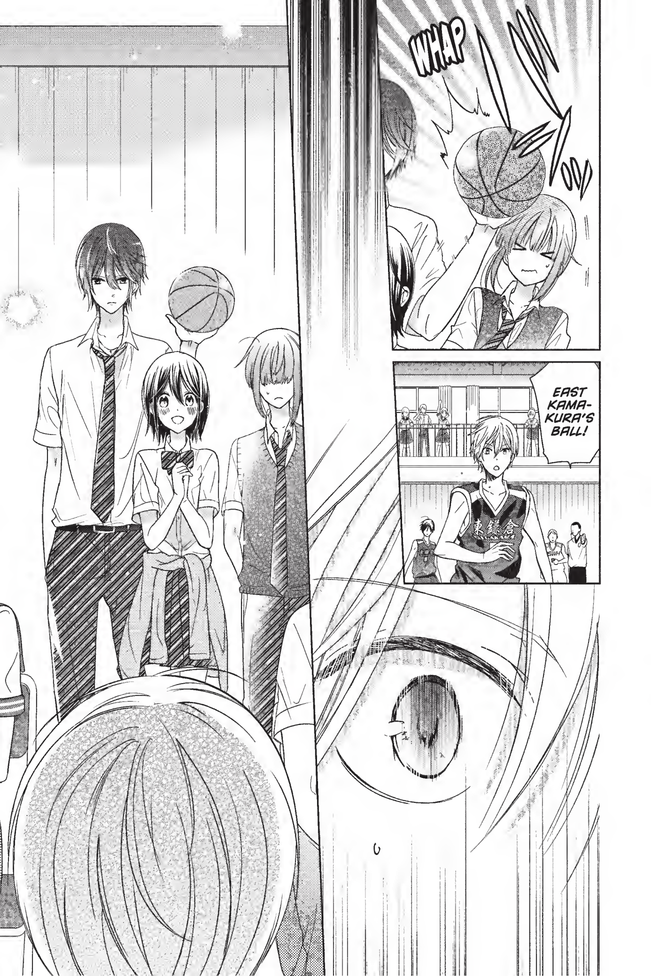

どきっ…
BADUMP
WATCH.

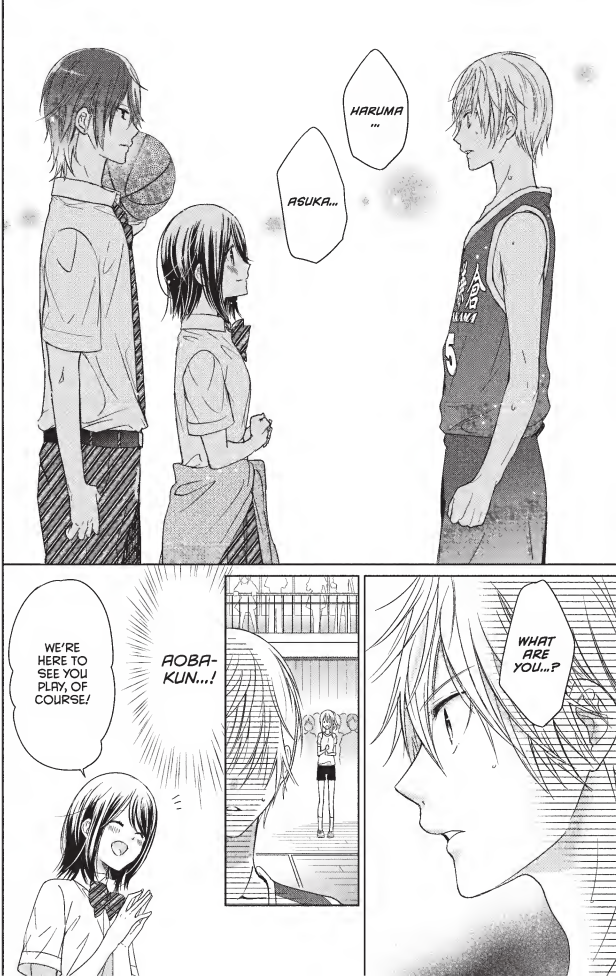

East Kamakura
5
7

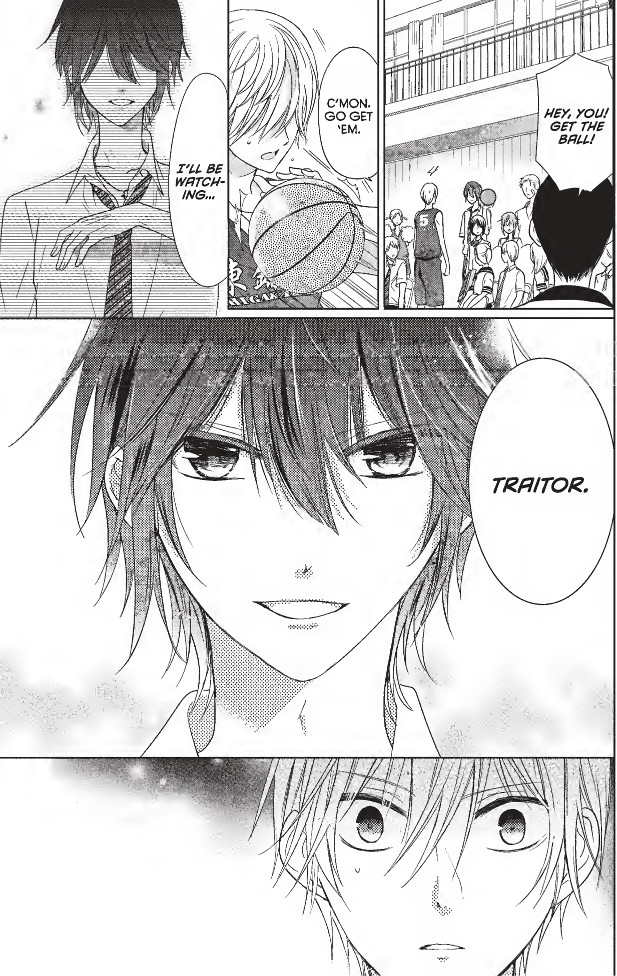

PLEASE LET THE GAME GO SMOOTHLY...!
ぎゅっ…
CLENCH

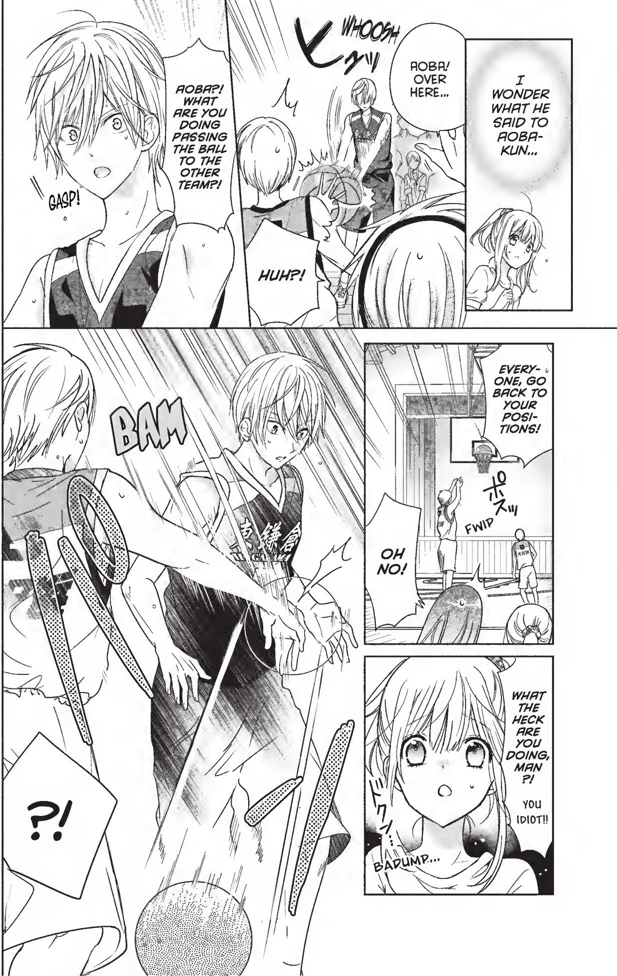

キュ
TMP
キュ
TMP
TMP
キュッ
FWIP
HE'S MADE ANOTHER BASKET!
IT'S ALREADY A 15 POINT DIFFERENCE!
ワァァ
Osawahama
1
East Kamakura
11
26
東鎌倉
HIGAKAMA
5
WOOHOO! C'MON! LET'S GO!
AOBA, YOU'RE ON FIRE, MAN!
THANKS!!

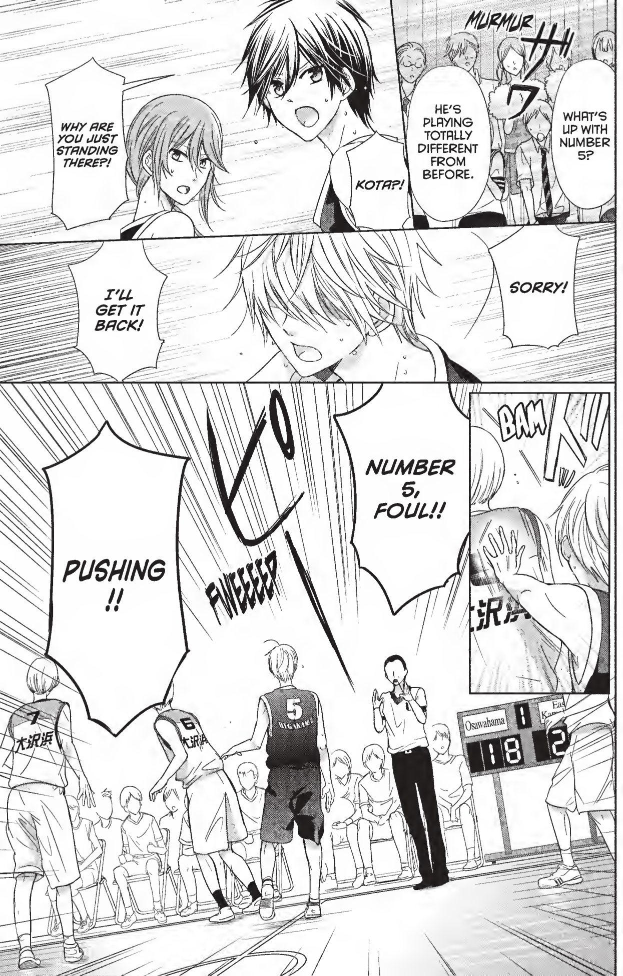

CHEER CHEER
I WAS CURIOUS WHO AOBA WAS AFTER HARUMA SAID HE WANTED TO SEE HIM. WELL, HE'S NOT BAD.
HE'S WAY BETTER THAN JUST "NOT BAD"!
I MEAN...
THIS IS AOBA PLAYING!
...?
WHAP
WELL, FOR A BASKETBALL TEAM...
WH... WHOA!
ヒュ
WHOOSH

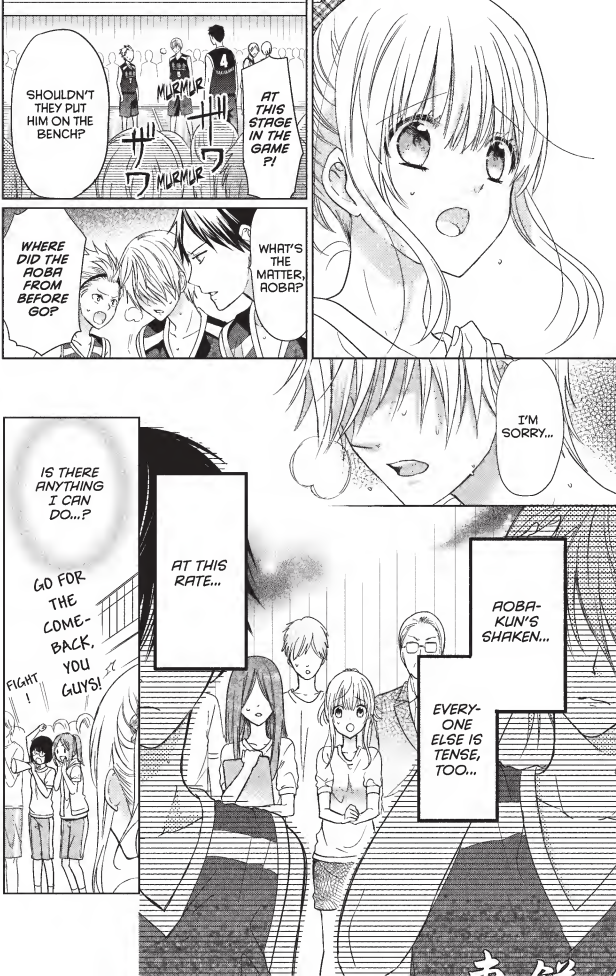

WHAP
EAST KAMA-KURA'S BALL!
東鎌倉

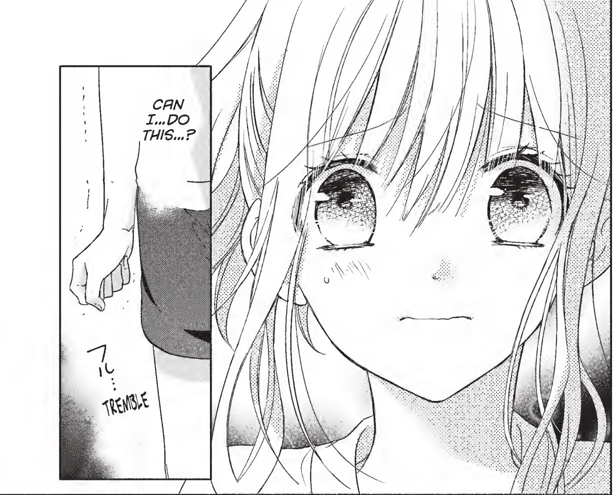

HARUMA ...
ASUKA...
WHAT ARE YOU...?
AOBA-KUN...!
WE'RE HERE TO SEE YOU PLAY, OF COURSE!

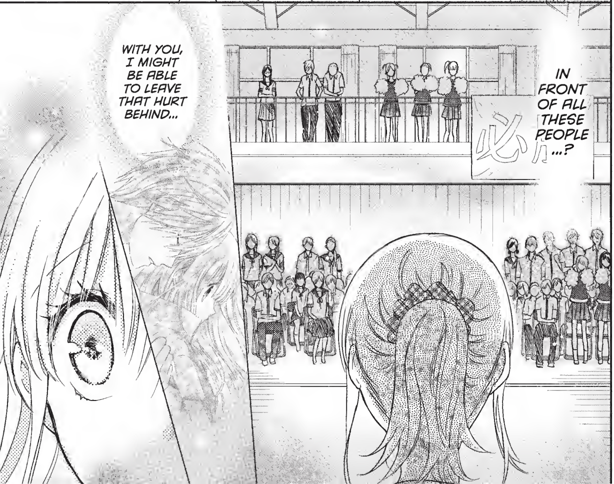

HEY, YOU! GET THE BALL!
C'MON. GO GET 'EM.
I'LL BE WATCHING...
TRAITOR.

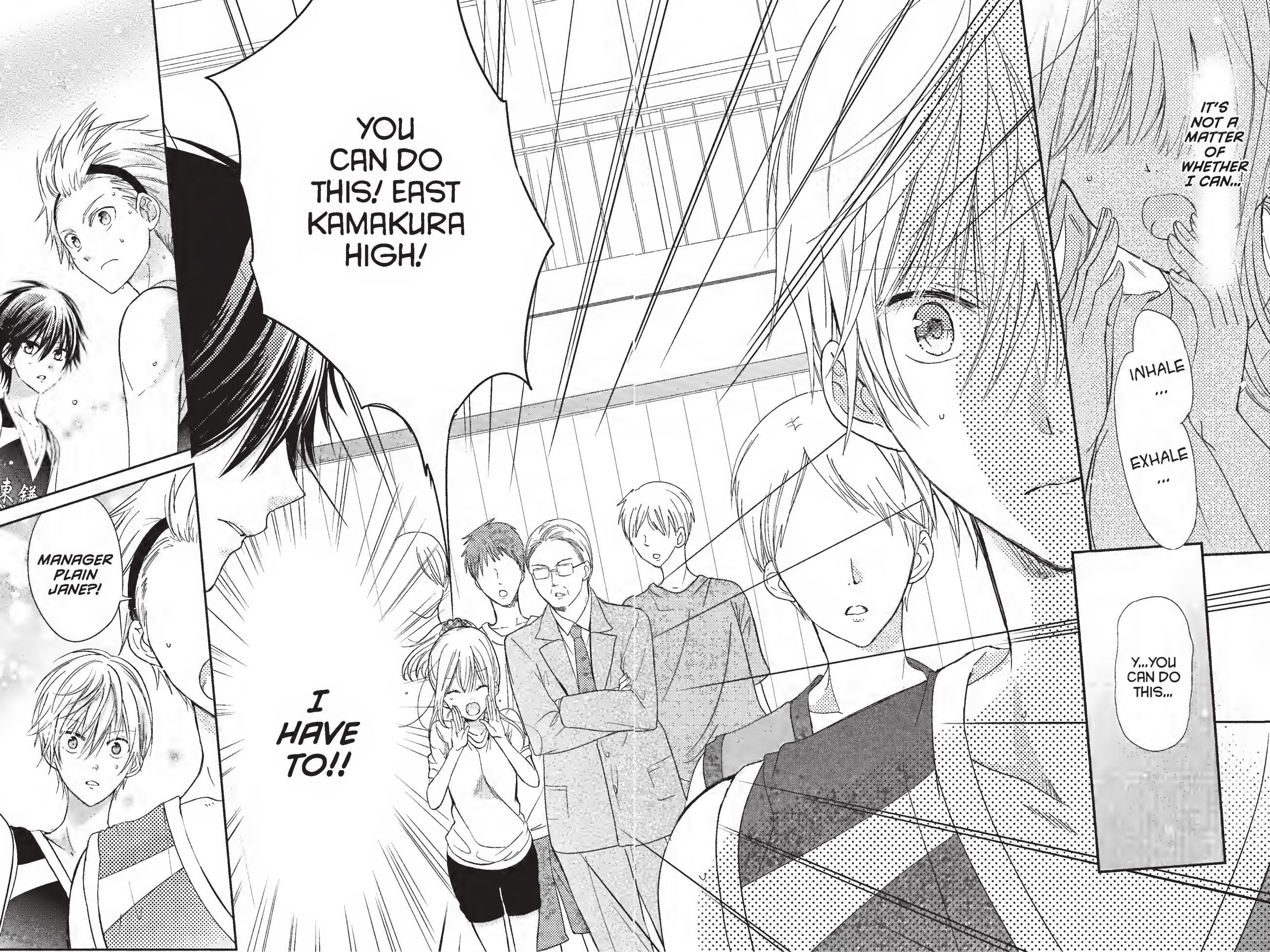

I WONDER WHAT HE SAID TO AOBA-KUN...
AOBA! OVER HERE...
ヒュッ
WHOOSH
HUH?!
AOBA?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING PASSING THE BALL TO THE OTHER TEAM?!
GASP!
EVERY-ONE, GO BACK TO YOUR POSI-TIONS!
ポスッ
FWIP
OH NO!
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING, MAN?!
YOU IDIOT!!
ドクン…
BADUMP...
BAM
?!

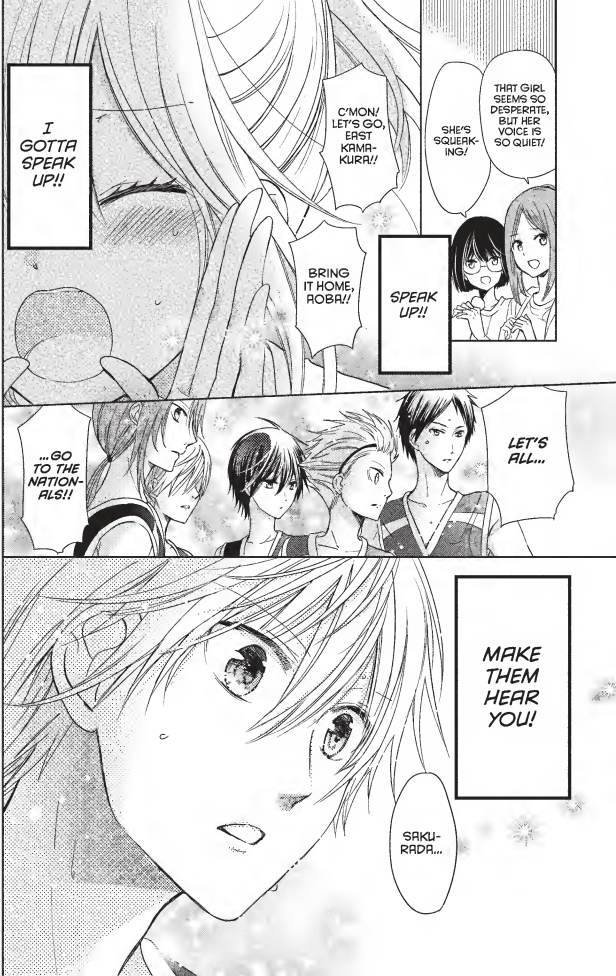

MURMUR
ザワ
WHAT'S UP WITH NUMBER 5?
HE'S PLAYING TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM BEFORE.
KOTA?!
WHY ARE YOU JUST STANDING THERE?!
SORRY!
I'LL GET IT BACK!
BAM
ドン
NUMBER 5, FOUL!!
ピー
FWEEEEP
PUSHING!!
7
大沢浜
6
大沢浜
5
HIGAKAMA
Osawahama
East Kama
1
18
2
大沢浜

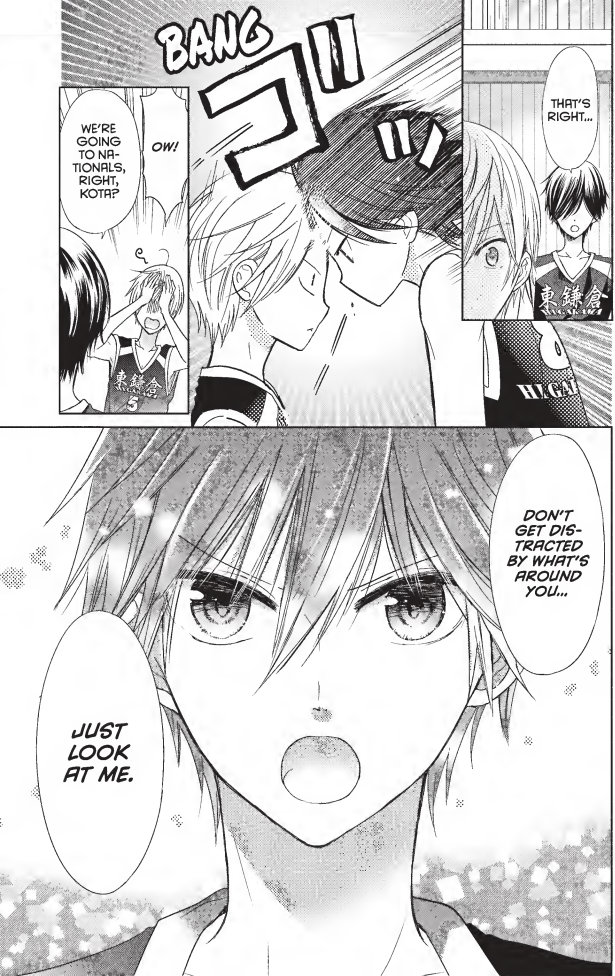

AT THIS STAGE IN THE GAME?!
MURMUR
ザワ
SHOULDN'T THEY PUT HIM ON THE BENCH?
MURMUR
ザワ
WHAT'S THE MATTER, AOBA?
WHERE DID THE AOBA FROM BEFORE GO?
I'M SORRY...
AOBA-KUN'S SHAKEN...
EVERYONE ELSE IS TENSE, TOO...
AT THIS RATE...
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO...?
GO FOR THE COMEBACK, YOU GUYS!
FIGHT!

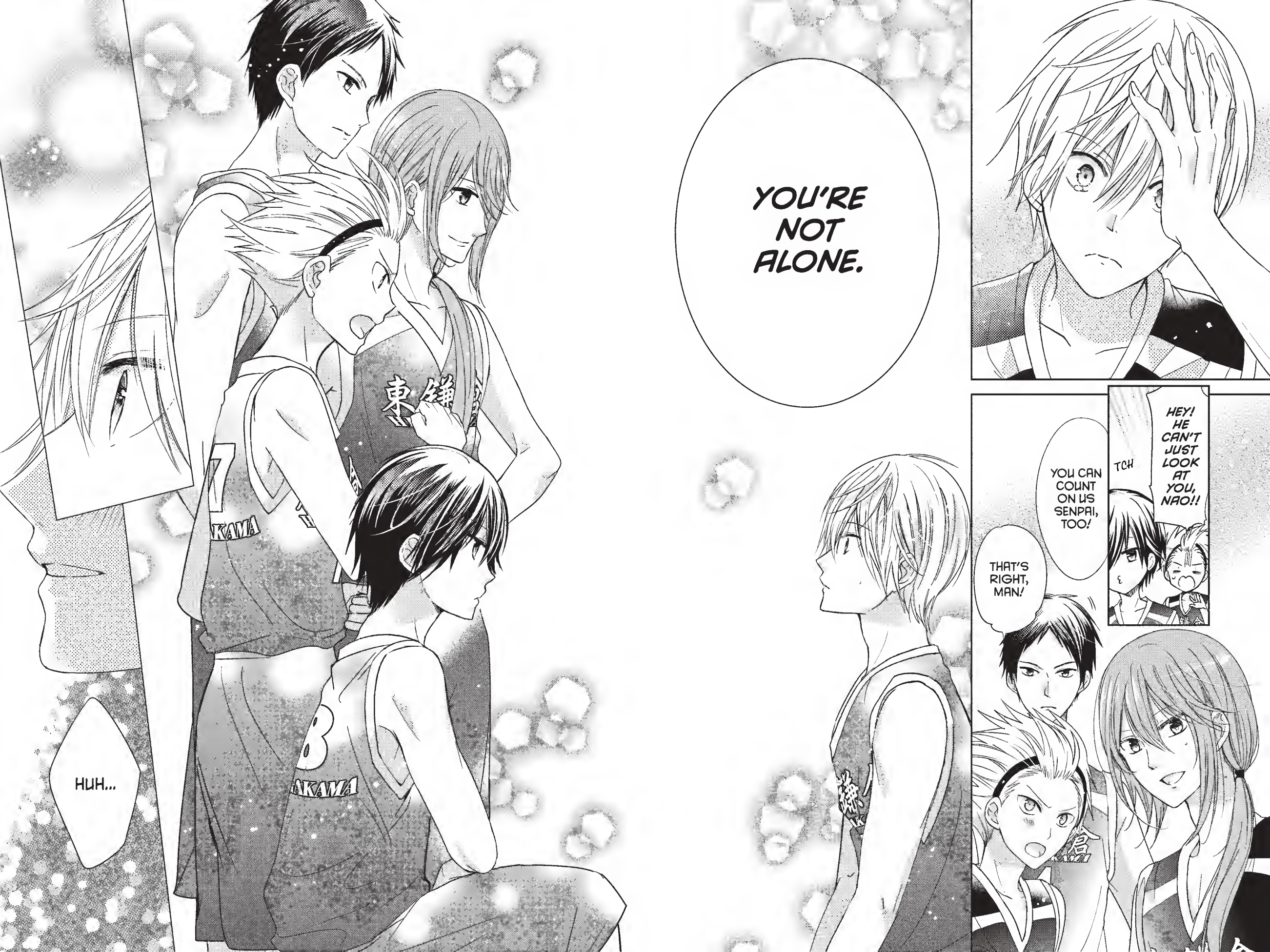

CAN I...DO THIS...?
フル…
TREMBLE

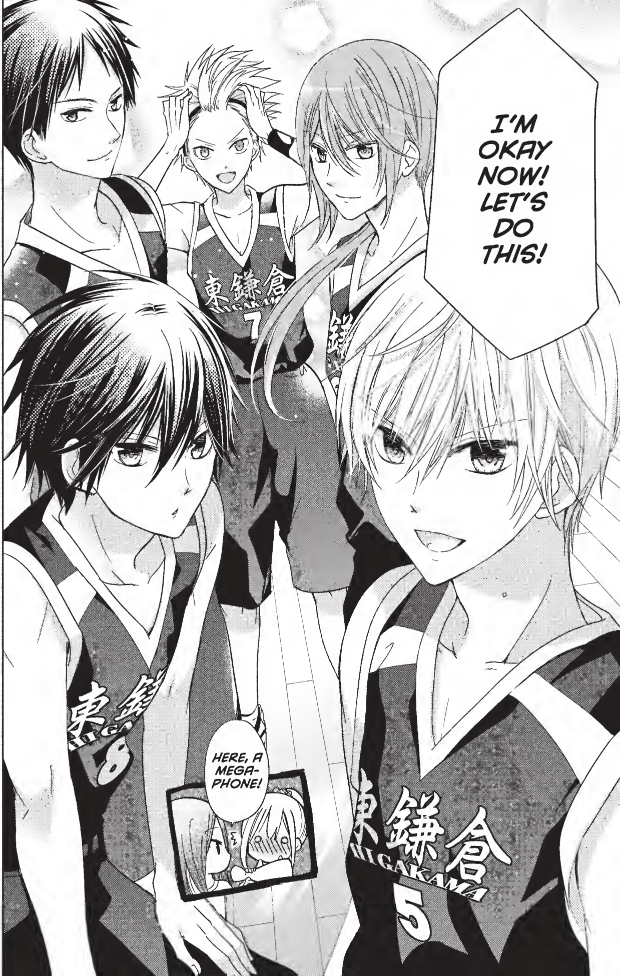

IN FRONT OF ALL THESE PEOPLE...?
必
WITH YOU, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO LEAVE THAT HURT BEHIND...

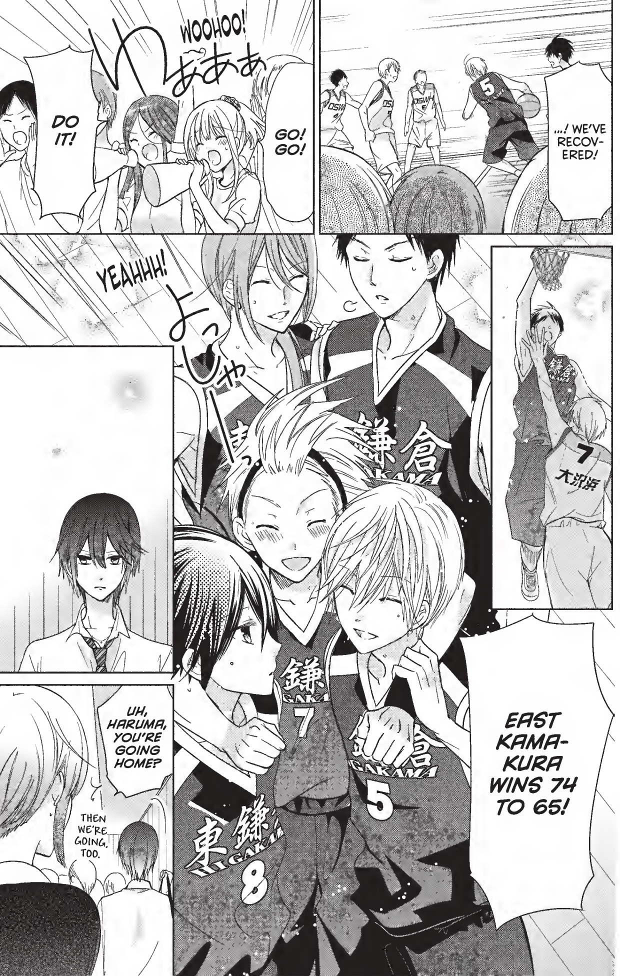

IT'S NOT A MATTER OF WHETHER I CAN...
INHALE...
EXHALE...
Y...YOU CAN DO THIS...
YOU CAN DO THIS! EAST KAMAKURA HIGH!
I HAVE TO!!
東鎌
MANAGER PLAIN JANE?!

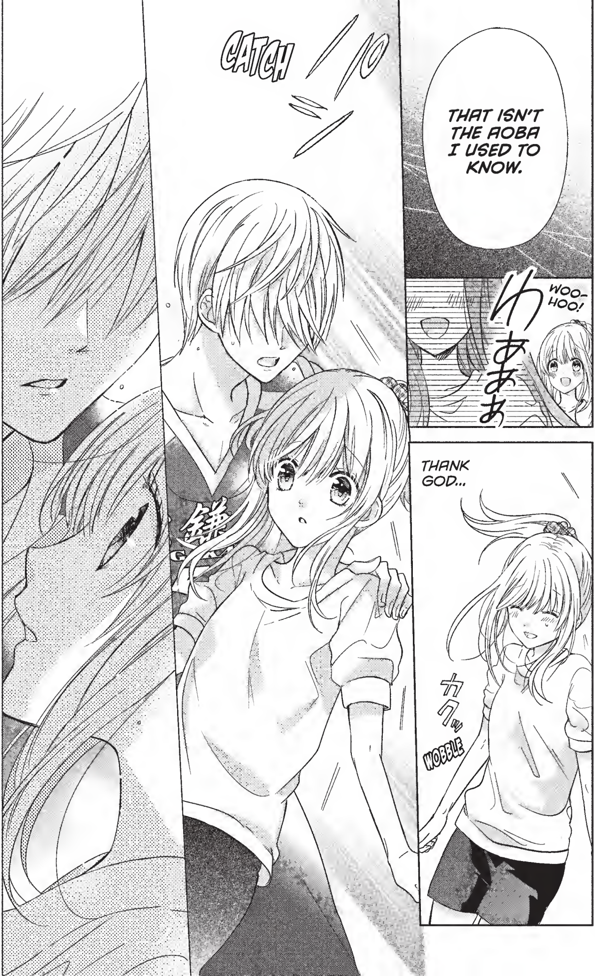

THAT GIRL SEEMS SO DESPERATE, BUT HER VOICE IS SO QUIET!
SHE'S SQUEAKING!
SPEAK UP!!
C'MON! LET'S GO, EAST KAMAKURA!!
BRING IT HOME, AOBA!!
I GOTTA SPEAK UP!!
LET'S ALL...
...GO TO THE NATIONALS!!
MAKE THEM HEAR YOU!
SAKURADA...

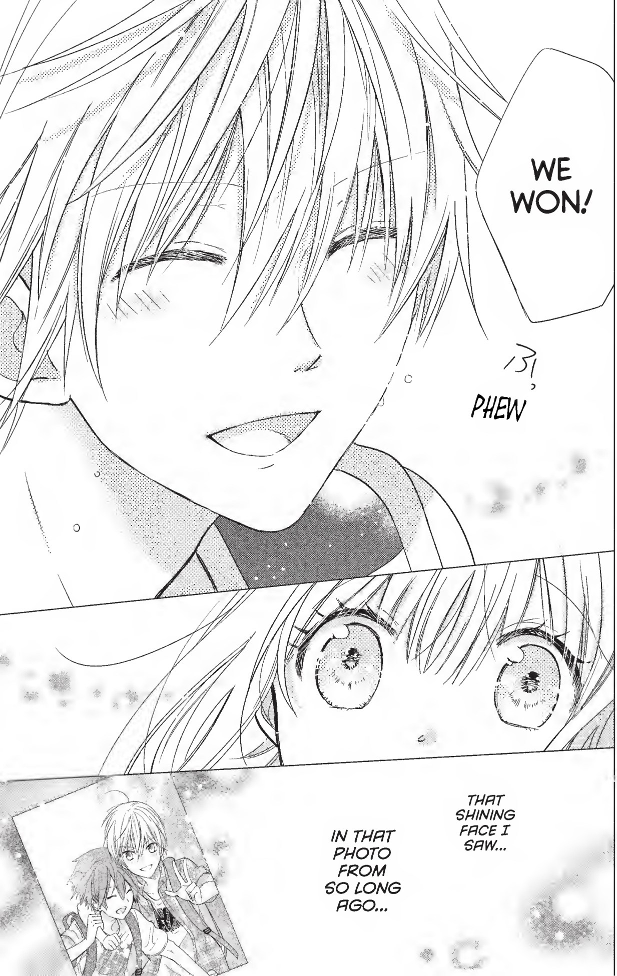

THAT'S RIGHT...
BANG
ゴッ
WE'RE GOING TO NATIONALS, RIGHT, KOTA?
OW!
東鎌倉
5
DON'T GET DISTRACTED BY WHAT'S AROUND YOU...
JUST LOOK AT ME.

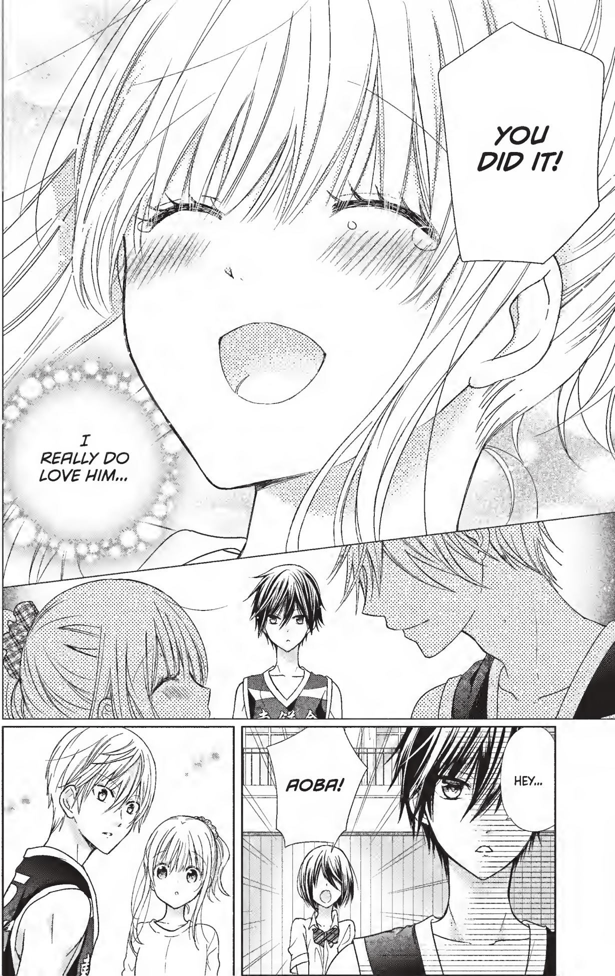

YOU'RE NOT ALONE.
HEY! HE CAN'T JUST LOOK AT YOU, NAO!!
TCH
YOU CAN COUNT ON US SENPAI, TOO!
THAT'S RIGHT, MAN!
東鎌
AKAMA
HUH...

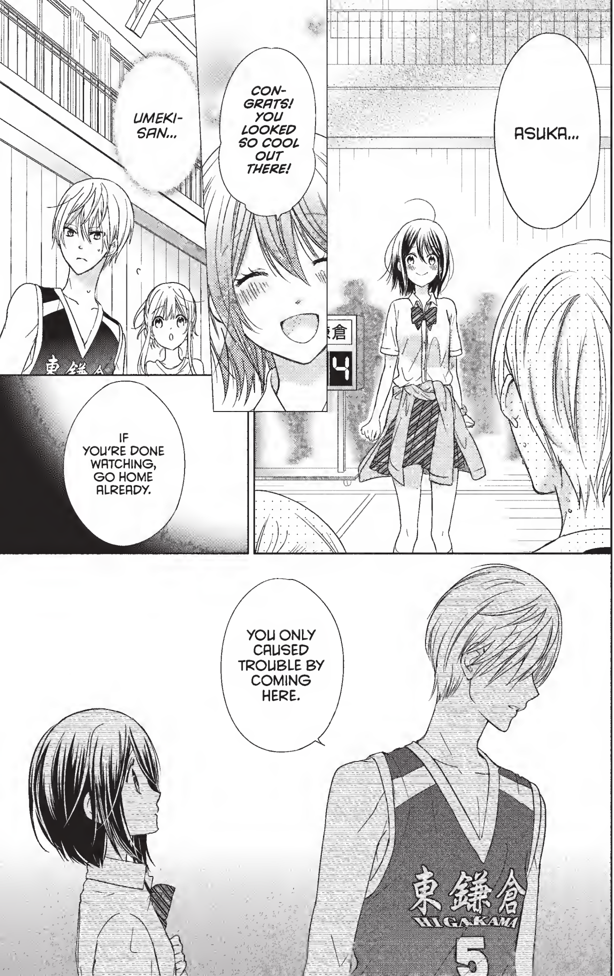

I'M OKAY NOW! LET'S DO THIS!
HERE, A MEGAPHONE!
東鎌倉
HIGAKAMA
5
7

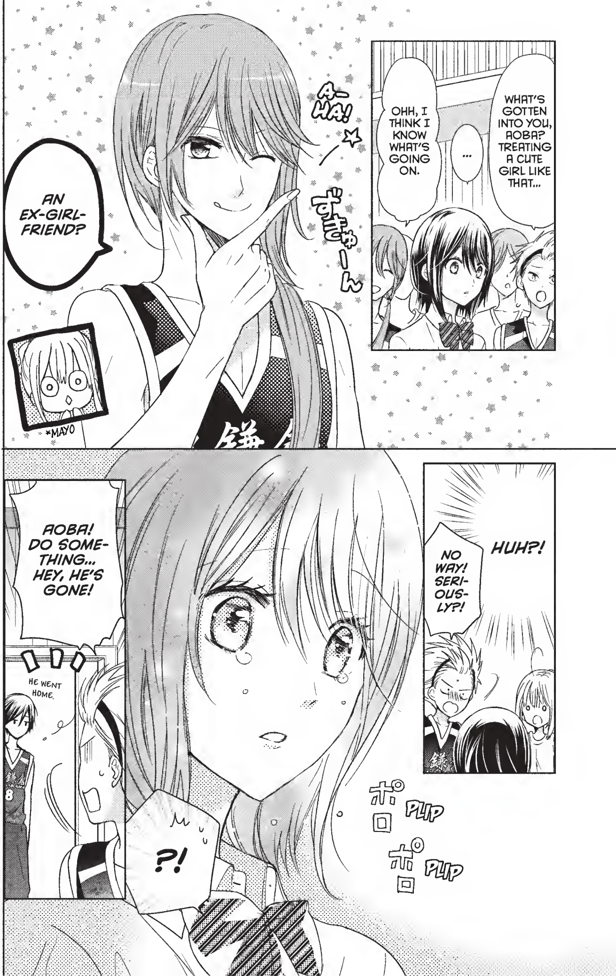

...! WE'VE RECOVERED!
OSWH
WOOHOO!
わあああ
GO! GO!
DO IT!
7
大沢浜
YEAHHH!
よっしゃーっ
鎌倉
EAST KAMAKURA WINS 74 TO 65!
UH, HARUMA, YOU'RE GOING HOME?
THEN WE'RE GOING, TOO.

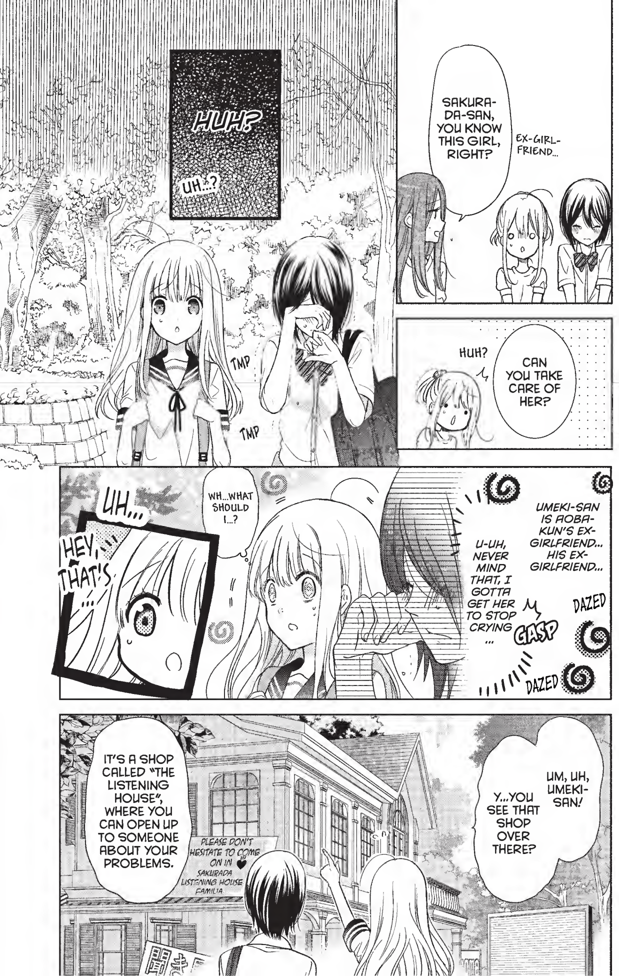

THAT ISN'T THE AOBA I USED TO KNOW.
わぁぁぁ
WOO-HOO!
THANK GOD...
カクッ
WOBBLE
CATCH
鎌

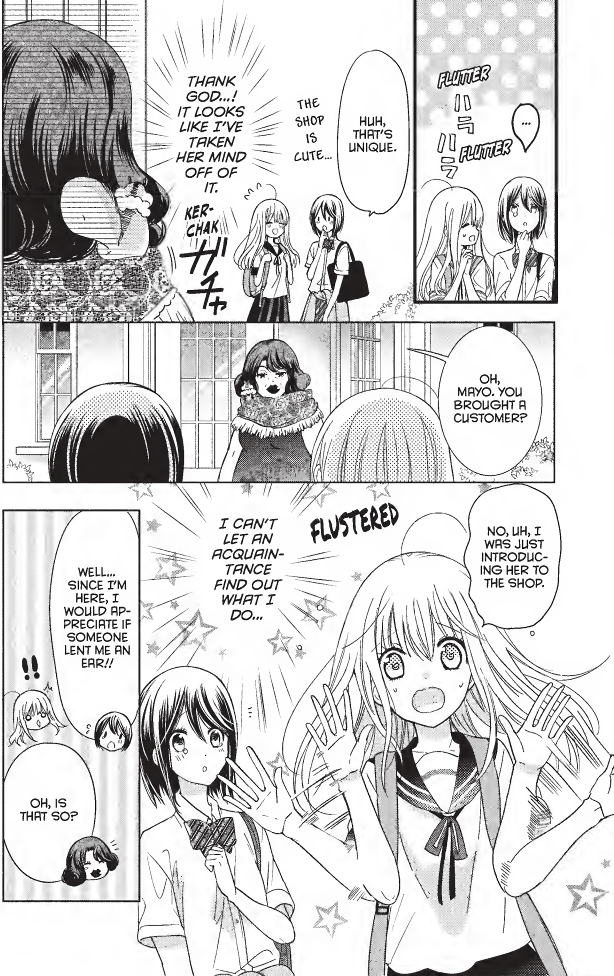

WE WON!
ふぅ
PHEW
THAT SHINING FACE I SAW...
IN THAT PHOTO FROM SO LONG AGO...

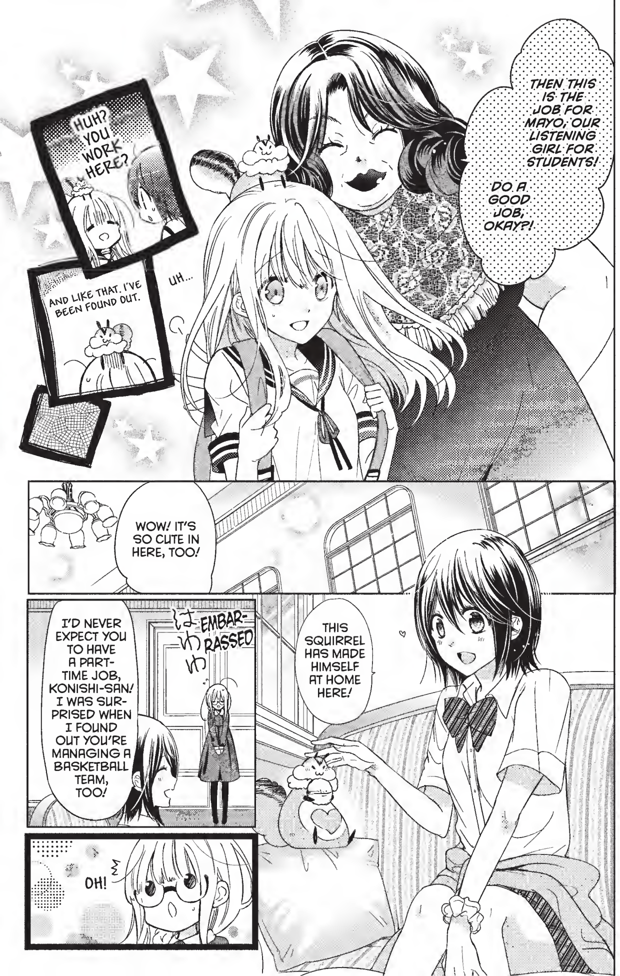

YOU DID IT!
I REALLY DO LOVE HIM...
HEY...
AOBA!

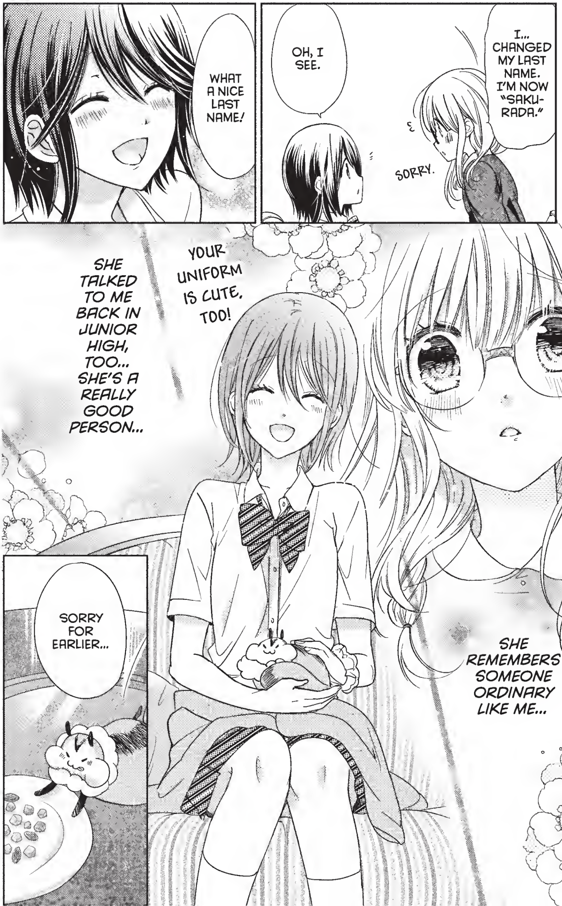

ASUKA...
CON-GRATS! YOU LOOKED SO COOL OUT THERE!
UMEKI-SAN...
IF YOU'RE DONE WATCHING, GO HOME ALREADY.
YOU ONLY CAUSED TROUBLE BY COMING HERE.
東鎌倉
HIGAKAMA
5

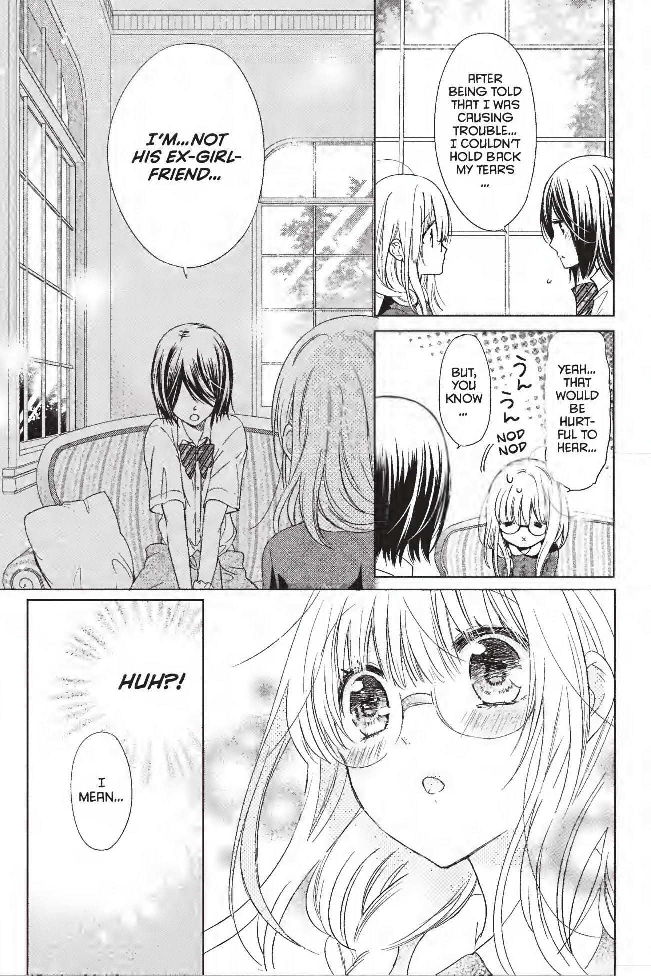

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, AOBA? TREATING A CUTE GIRL LIKE THAT...
...
OHH, I THINK I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.
A-HA!
ずきゅーん
AN EX-GIRLFRIEND?
*MAYO
HUH?!
NO WAY! SERIOUSLY?!
ポロ PLIP
ポロ PLIP
?!
AOBA! DO SOMETHING... HEY, HE'S GONE!
HE WENT HOME.

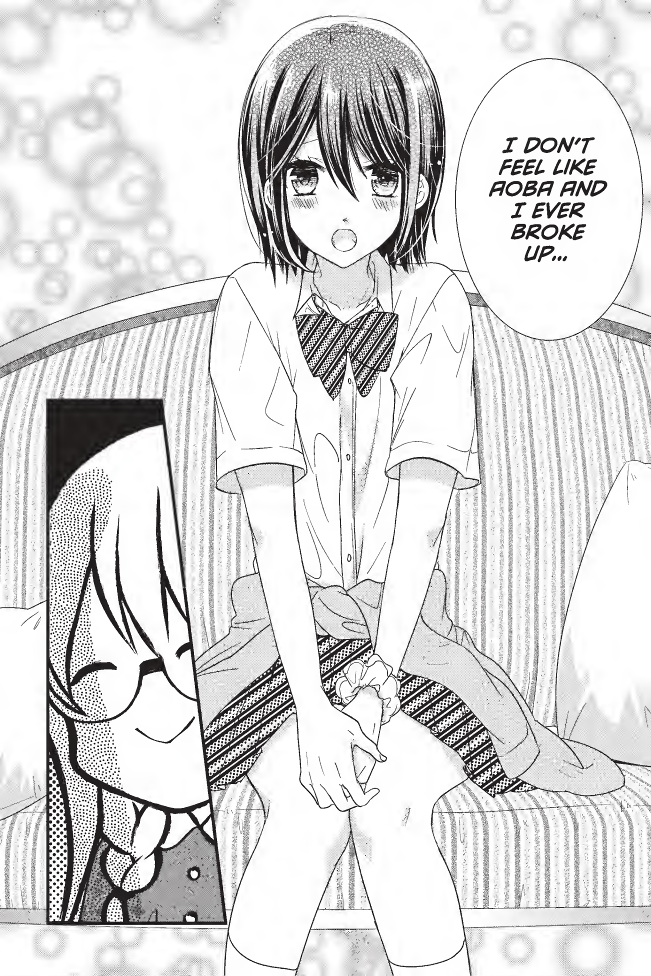

SAKURA-DA-SAN, YOU KNOW THIS GIRL, RIGHT?
EX-GIRL-FRIEND...
CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF HER?
HUH?
HUH?
UH...?
TMP
TMP
UMEKI-SAN IS AOBA-KUN'S EX-GIRLFRIEND... HIS EX-GIRLFRIEND...
U-UH, NEVER MIND THAT, I GOTTA GET HER TO STOP CRYING...
DAZED
GASP
DAZED
WH...WHAT SHOULD I...?
UH...
HEY, THAT'S...
UM, UH, UMEKI-SAN!
Y...YOU SEE THAT SHOP OVER THERE?
IT'S A SHOP CALLED "THE LISTENING HOUSE", WHERE YOU CAN OPEN UP TO SOMEONE ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS.
PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO COME ON IN ♥ SAKURADA LISTENING HOUSE FAMILIA

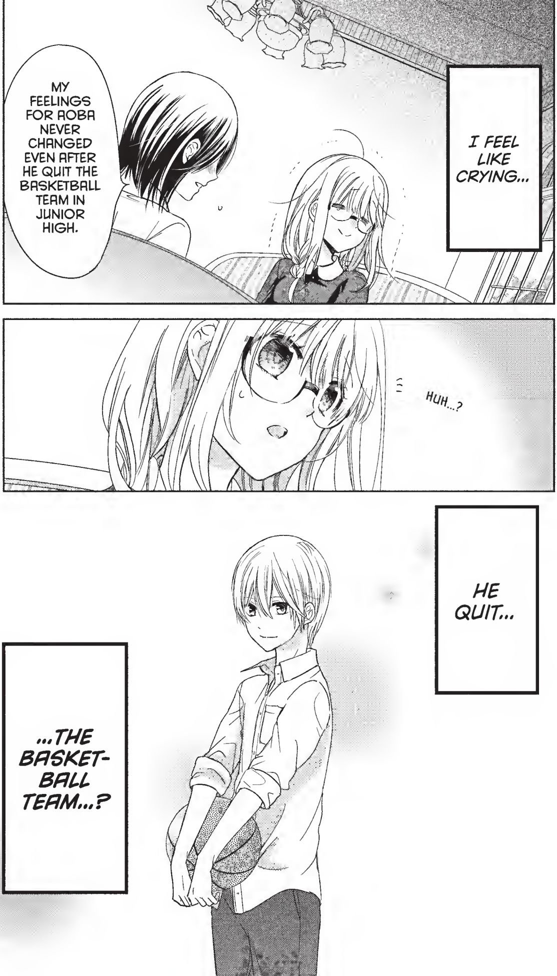

FLUTTER
ハラ
…
ハラ
FLUTTER
HUH, THAT'S UNIQUE.
THE SHOP IS CUTE…
THANK GOD…! IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE TAKEN HER MIND OFF OF IT.
KER-CHAK
ガチャ
OH, MAYO. YOU BROUGHT A CUSTOMER?
NO, UH, I WAS JUST INTRODUCING HER TO THE SHOP.
FLUSTERED
I CAN'T LET AN ACQUAINTANCE FIND OUT WHAT I DO…
WELL… SINCE I'M HERE, I WOULD APPRECIATE IF SOMEONE LENT ME AN EAR!!
!!
OH, IS THAT SO?

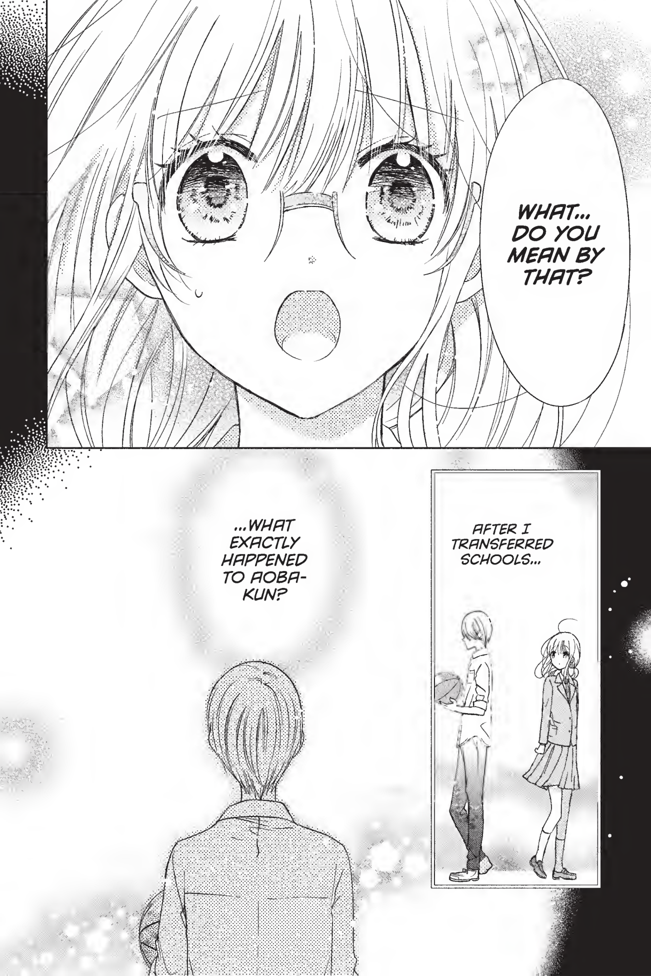

THEN THIS IS THE JOB FOR MAYO, OUR LISTENING GIRL FOR STUDENTS!
DO A GOOD JOB, OKAY?!
HUH? YOU WORK HERE?
UH...
AND LIKE THAT, I'VE BEEN FOUND OUT.
WOW! IT'S SO CUTE IN HERE, TOO!
THIS SQUIRREL HAS MADE HIMSELF AT HOME HERE!
はわわ EMBARRASSED
I'D NEVER EXPECT YOU TO HAVE A PART-TIME JOB, KONISHI-SAN! I WAS SURPRISED WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU'RE MANAGING A BASKETBALL TEAM, TOO!
OH!


I... CHANGED MY LAST NAME. I'M NOW "SAKURADA."
SORRY.
OH, I SEE.
WHAT A NICE LAST NAME!
YOUR UNIFORM IS CUTE, TOO!
SHE TALKED TO ME BACK IN JUNIOR HIGH, TOO... SHE'S A REALLY GOOD PERSON...
SHE REMEMBERS SOMEONE ORDINARY LIKE ME...
SORRY FOR EARLIER...


AFTER BEING TOLD THAT I WAS CAUSING TROUBLE... I COULDN'T HOLD BACK MY TEARS ...
YEAH... THAT WOULD BE HURTFUL TO HEAR...
うん うん
NOD NOD
BUT, YOU KNOW ...
I'M...NOT HIS EX-GIRLFRIEND...
HUH?!
I MEAN...

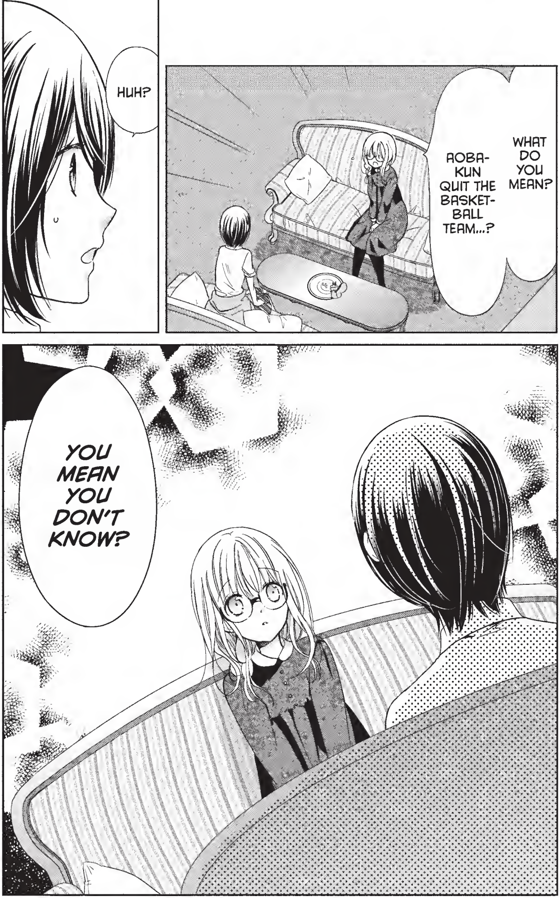

I DON'T FEEL LIKE AOBA AND I EVER BROKE UP...

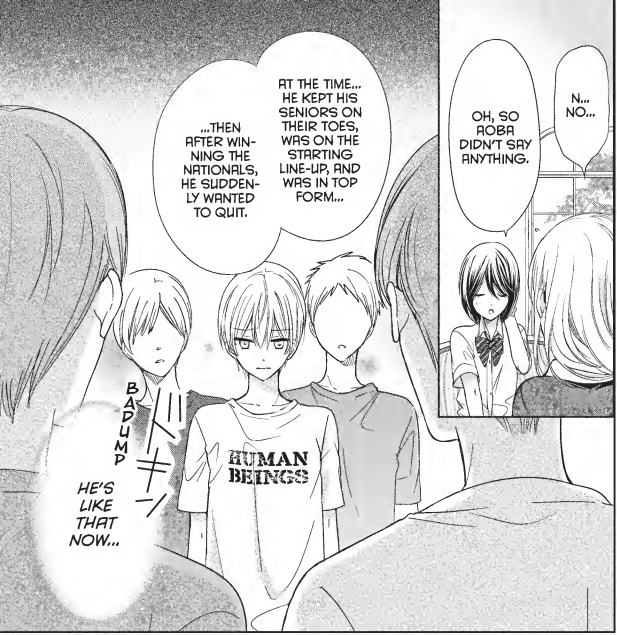

I FEEL LIKE CRYING...
MY FEELINGS FOR AOBA NEVER CHANGED EVEN AFTER HE QUIT THE BASKETBALL TEAM IN JUNIOR HIGH.
HUH...?
HE QUIT...
...THE BASKETBALL TEAM...?


WHAT... DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
AFTER I TRANSFERRED SCHOOLS...
...WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED TO AOBA-KUN?

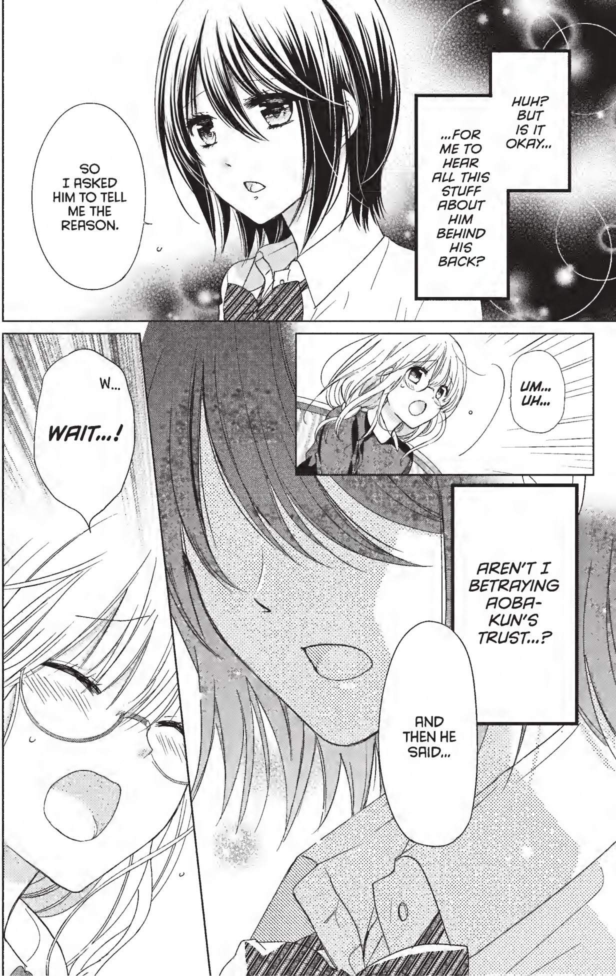
Time.11

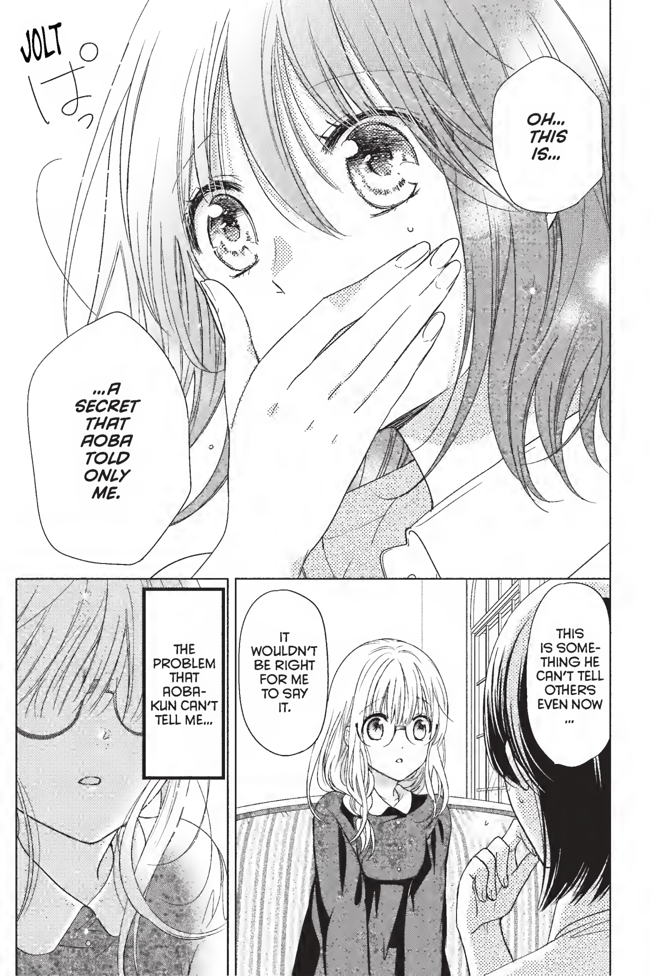
YESTERDAY'S ENEMY.

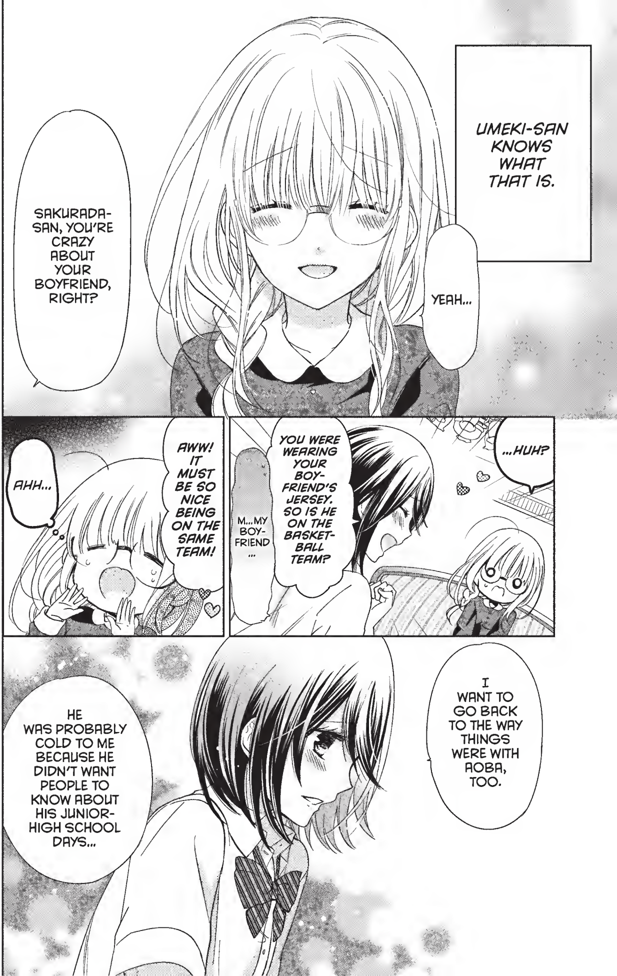

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
AOBA-KUN QUIT THE BASKETBALL TEAM...?
HUH?
YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW?

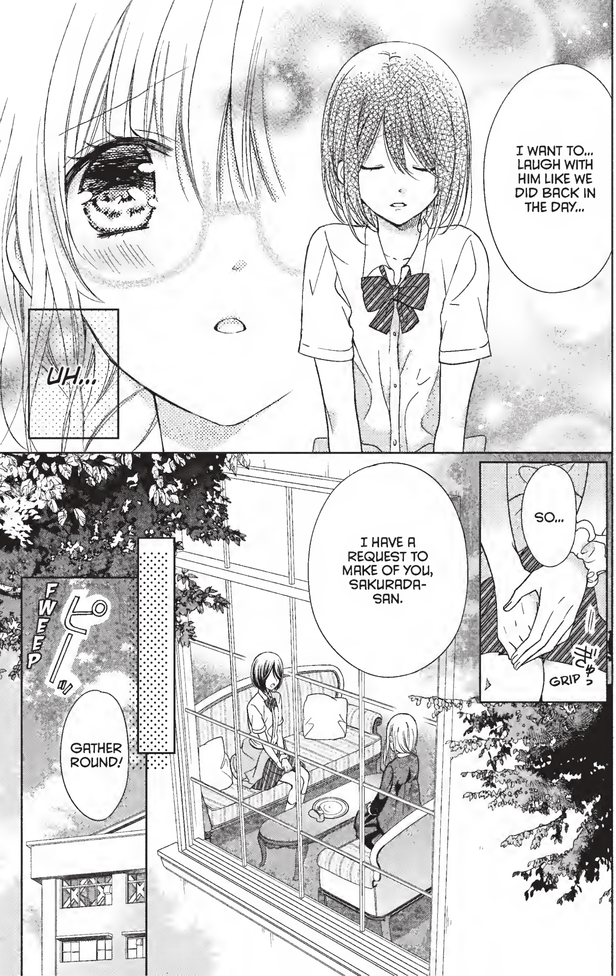

N... NO...
OH, SO AOBA DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
AT THE TIME... HE KEPT HIS SENIORS ON THEIR TOES, WAS ON THE STARTING LINE-UP, AND WAS IN TOP FORM...
...THEN AFTER WINNING THE NATIONALS, HE SUDDENLY WANTED TO QUIT.
BADUMP
HE'S LIKE THAT NOW...
HUMAN BEINGS

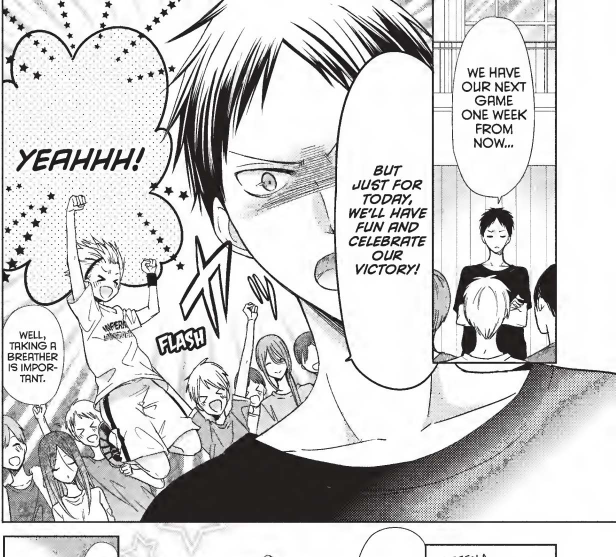
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS


HUH? BUT IS IT OKAY...
...FOR ME TO HEAR ALL THIS STUFF ABOUT HIM BEHIND HIS BACK?
SO I ASKED HIM TO TELL ME THE REASON.
UM... UH...
AREN'T I BETRAYING AOBA-KUN'S TRUST...?
AND THEN HE SAID...
W... *WAIT...!*


JOLT ぱっ
OH... THIS IS...
...A SECRET THAT AOBA TOLD ONLY ME.
THIS IS SOMETHING HE CAN'T TELL OTHERS EVEN NOW...
IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT FOR ME TO SAY IT.
THE PROBLEM THAT AOBA-KUN CAN'T TELL ME...


UMEKI-SAN KNOWS WHAT THAT IS.
YEAH...
SAKURADA-SAN, YOU'RE CRAZY ABOUT YOUR BOYFRIEND, RIGHT?
...HUH?
YOU WERE WEARING YOUR BOYFRIEND'S JERSEY. SO IS HE ON THE BASKETBALL TEAM?
M...MY BOYFRIEND...
AWW! IT MUST BE SO NICE BEING ON THE SAME TEAM!
AHH...
I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE WAY THINGS WERE WITH AOBA, TOO.
HE WAS PROBABLY COLD TO ME BECAUSE HE DIDN'T WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT HIS JUNIOR-HIGH SCHOOL DAYS...

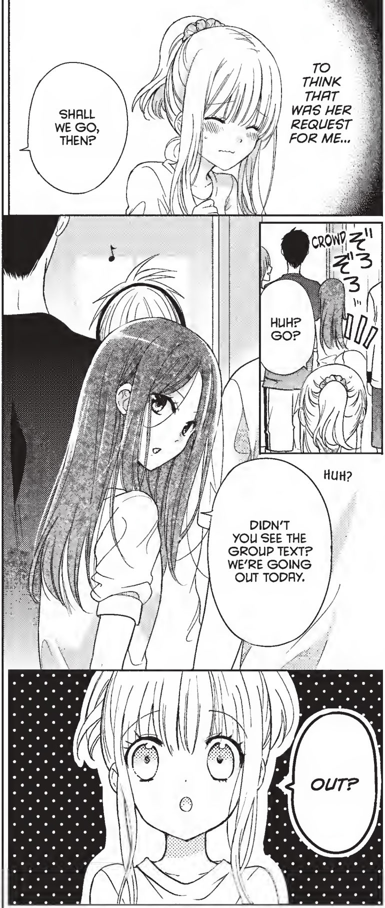

I WANT TO... LAUGH WITH HIM LIKE WE DID BACK IN THE DAY...
UH...
SO...
ぎゅっ
GRIP
I HAVE A REQUEST TO MAKE OF YOU, SAKURADA-SAN.
ピー
FWEEP
GATHER ROUND!

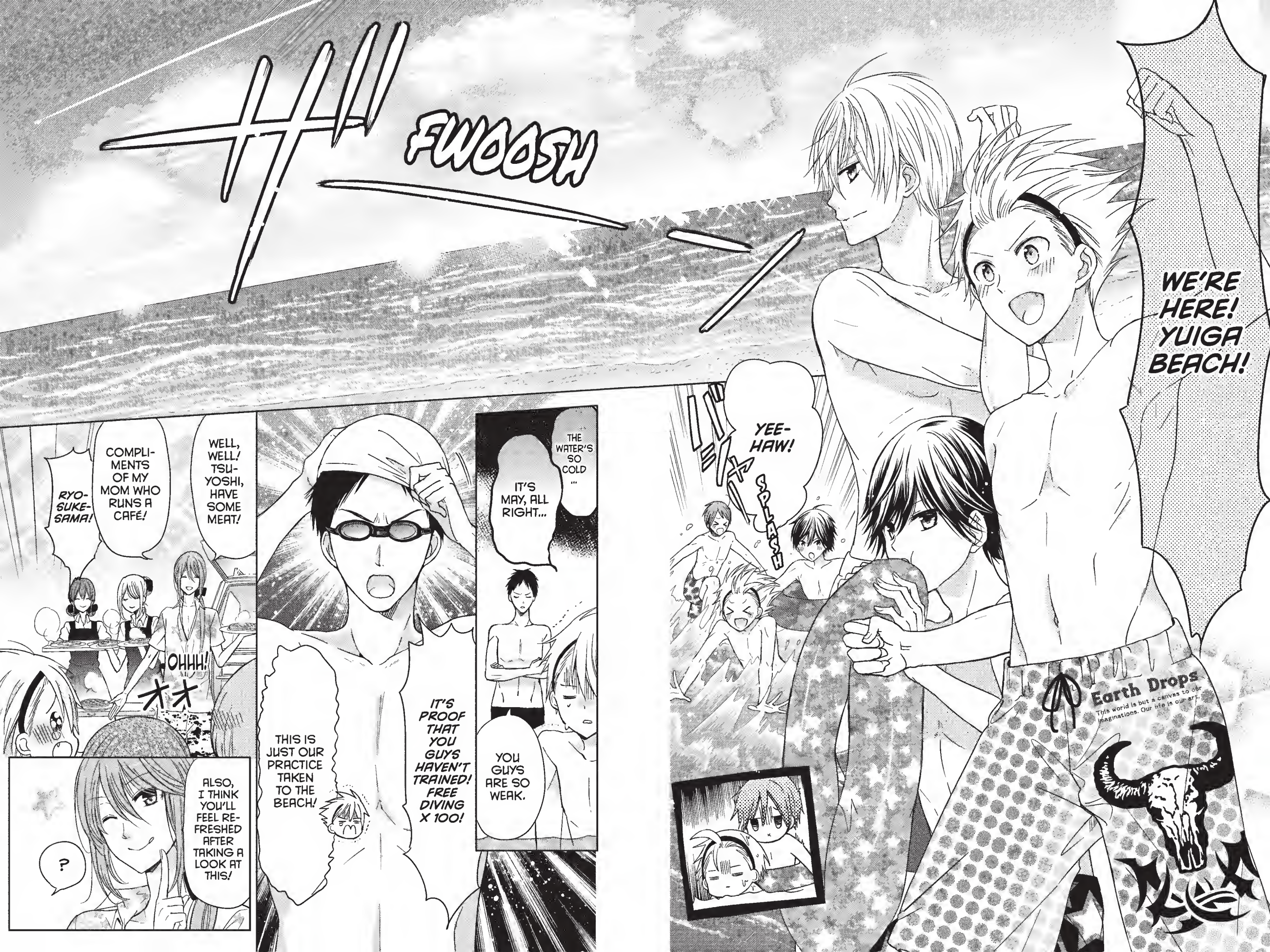

WE HAVE OUR NEXT GAME ONE WEEK FROM NOW...
BUT JUST FOR TODAY, WE'LL HAVE FUN AND CELEBRATE OUR VICTORY!
FLASH
YEAHHH!
WELL, TAKING A BREATHER IS IMPORTANT.
WOO HOO!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE TOOK A BREAK FROM PRACTICE.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SAKURADA-SAN? YOU SEEM OUT OF IT.
HUH?!
ビク
JOLT
UH...
I'M JUST...
OH, REALLY?
ちら
GLANCE

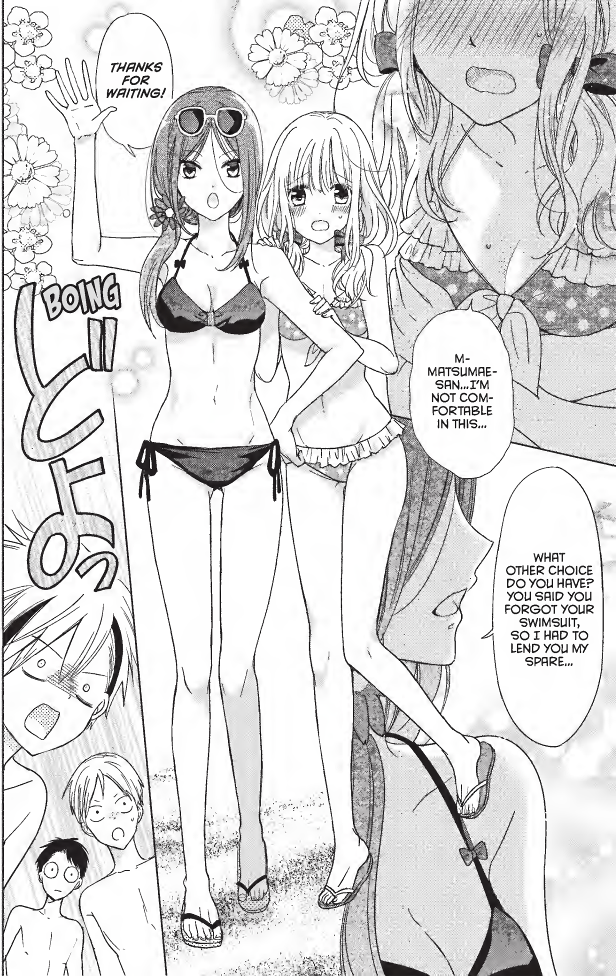
AND THEN,
YOU KNOW...

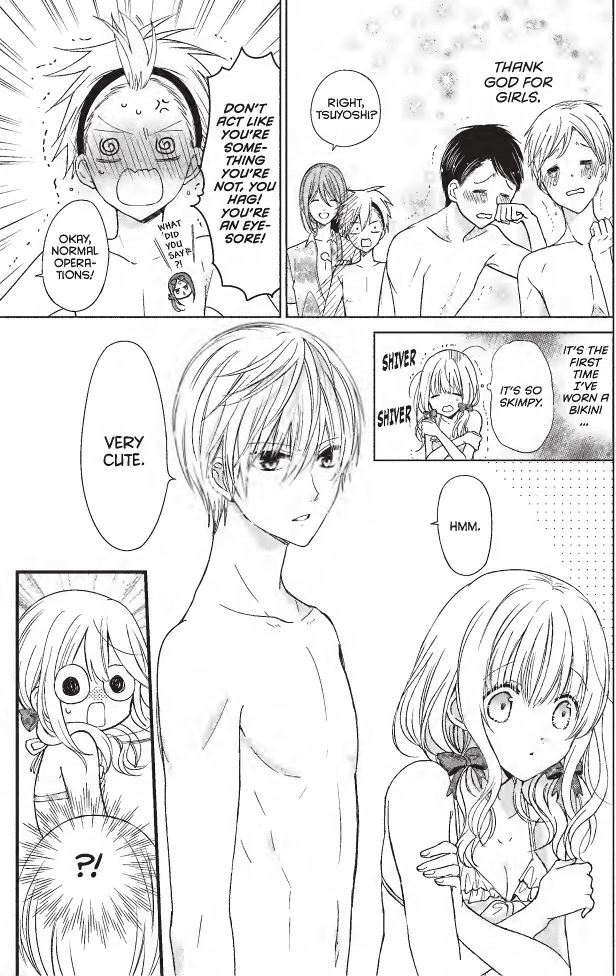
ONE AREA OF THE VERY SLOPE-HEAVY TOWN IS... WELL... A VERY ✧ ***LUXURIOUS RESIDENTIAL AREA.*** ✧ I REALLY LIKE TAKING A WALK THERE. ♥

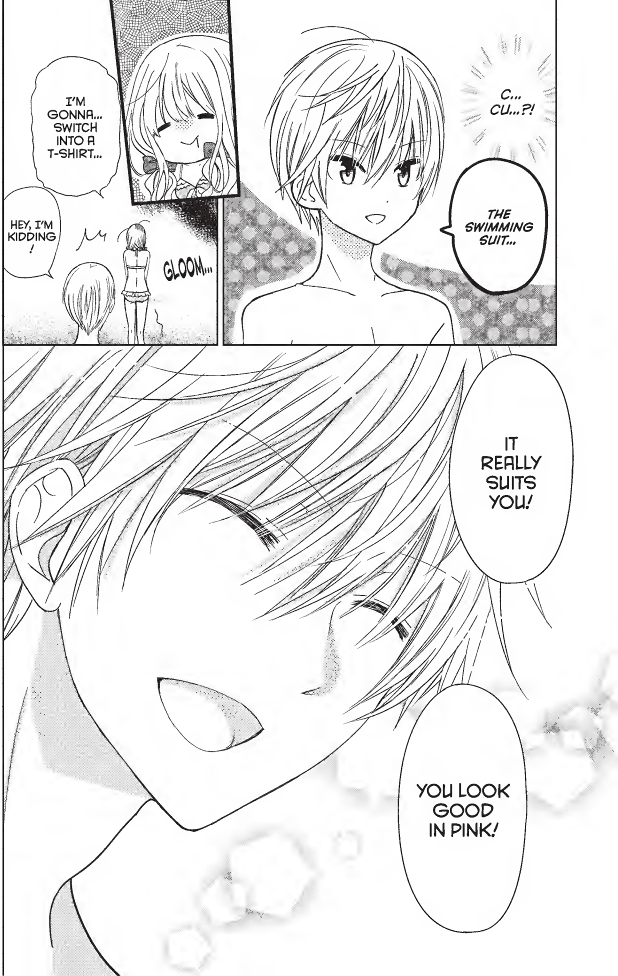
I'M JUST A COMMONER, SO IT'S FUN IMAGINING WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE LIVE THERE AND WHAT KIND OF LIVES THEY LEAD. I THINK THAT THEY PROBABLY DON'T GO SHOPPING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD SUPERMARKET, OR THEY HAVE A CHEF WHO COOKS FOR THEM. OR IF THERE'S A DELIVERY VAN STOPPED IN FRONT OF A HOUSE, THEN THEY MUST BE DELIVERING CRAB!! I THINK ABOUT THESE SILLY THINGS AS I WALK. I'M AN IDIOT, AREN'T I? ALSO, WHEN I SEE A GRANNY BIKE NEXT TO A BLACK FOREIGN AUTOMOBILE, I FEEL AN AFFINITY FOR THAT BIKE. BOY, AM I AN IDIOT!

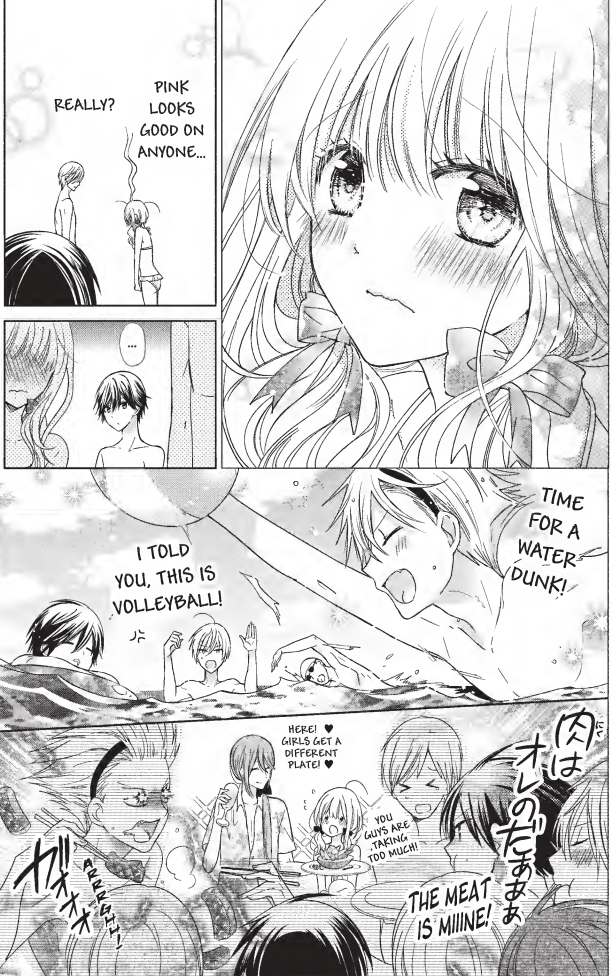

TO THINK THAT WAS HER REQUEST FOR ME...
SHALL WE GO, THEN?
CROWD ぞろぞろ
HUH? GO?
HUH?
DIDN'T YOU SEE THE GROUP TEXT? WE'RE GOING OUT TODAY.
OUT?

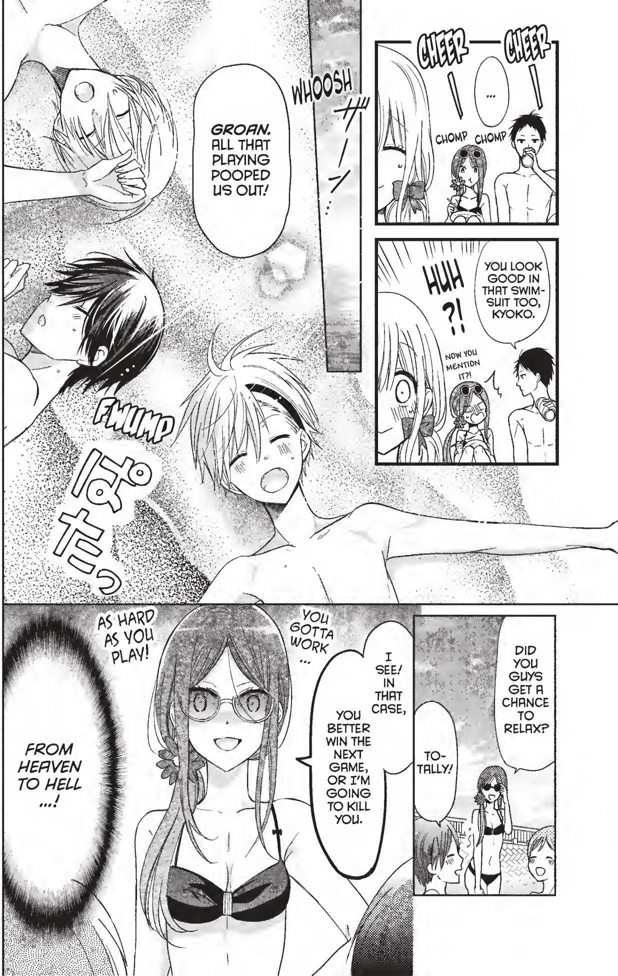

WE'RE HERE! YUIGA BEACH!
FWOOSH
YEE-HAW!
SPLASH
Earth Drops
This world is but a canvas to our imaginations. Our life is our art.
THE WATER'S SO COLD...
IT'S MAY, ALL RIGHT...
YOU GUYS ARE SO WEAK.
IT'S PROOF THAT YOU GUYS HAVEN'T TRAINED! FREE DIVING X 100!
THIS IS JUST OUR PRACTICE TAKEN TO THE BEACH!
WELL, WELL! TSUYOSHI, HAVE SOME MEAT!
COMPLIMENTS OF MY MOM WHO RUNS A CAFÉ!
RYOSUKE-SAMA!
OHHH!
ALSO, I THINK YOU'LL FEEL REFRESHED AFTER TAKING A LOOK AT THIS!
?

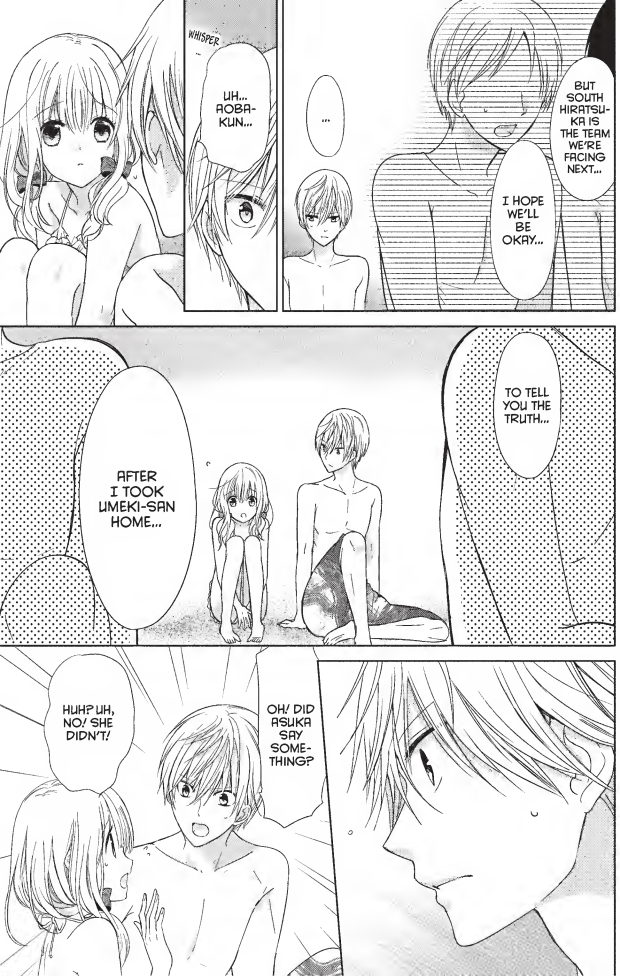

THANKS FOR WAITING!
BOING
じいっ
M-MATSUMAE-SAN...I'M NOT COMFORTABLE IN THIS...
WHAT OTHER CHOICE DO YOU HAVE? YOU SAID YOU FORGOT YOUR SWIMSUIT, SO I HAD TO LEND YOU MY SPARE...

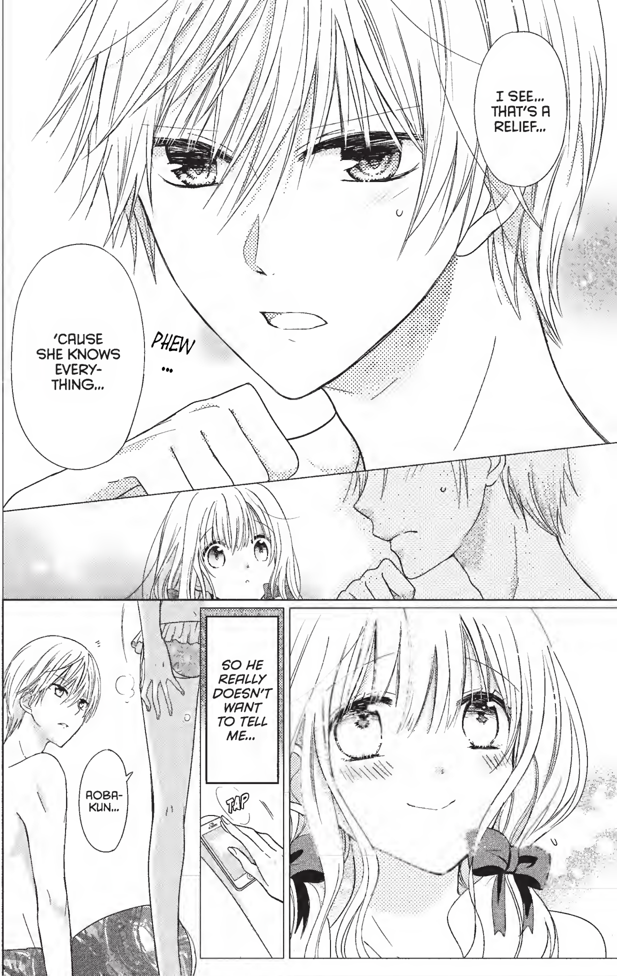

THANK GOD FOR GIRLS.
RIGHT, TSUYOSHI?
DON'T ACT LIKE YOU'RE SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT, YOU HAG! YOU'RE AN EYESORE!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
OKAY, NORMAL OPERATIONS!
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE WORN A BIKINI ...
IT'S SO SKIMPY.
SHIVER
SHIVER
HMM.
VERY CUTE.
?!

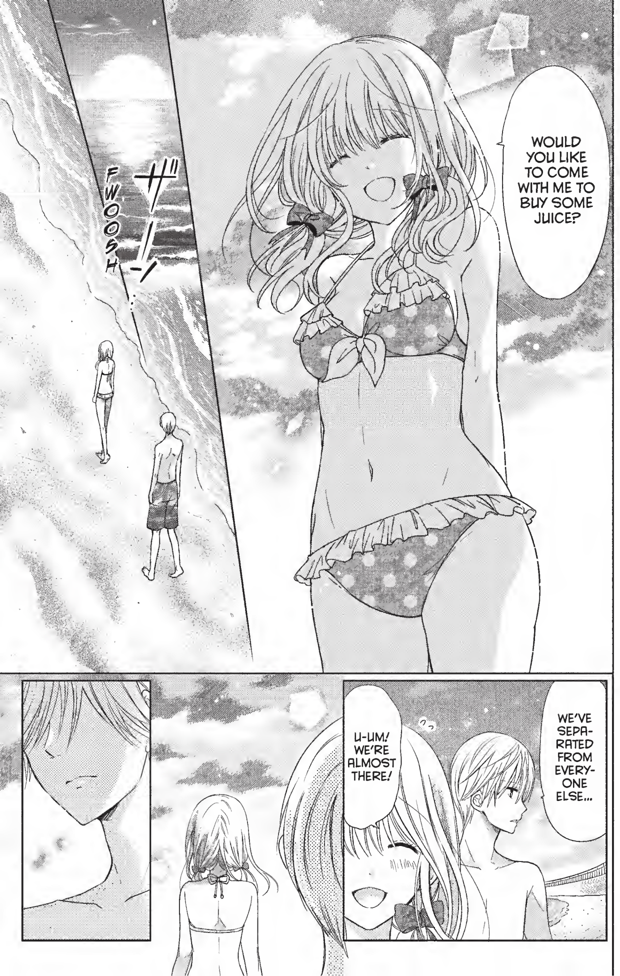

C... CU...?!
THE SWIMMING SUIT...
I'M GONNA... SWITCH INTO A T-SHIRT...
GLOOM...
HEY, I'M KIDDING!
IT REALLY SUITS YOU!
YOU LOOK GOOD IN PINK!

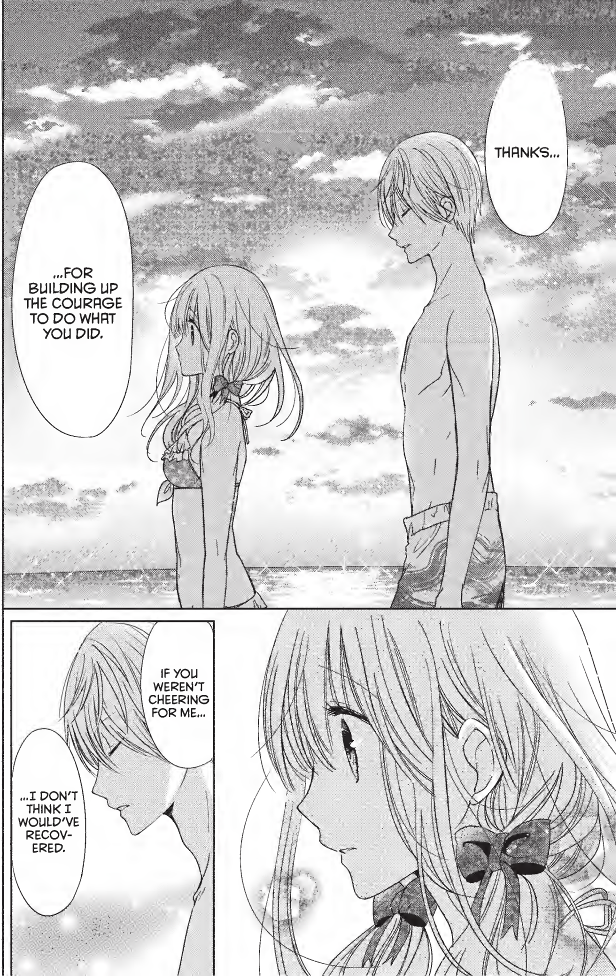

PINK LOOKS GOOD ON ANYONE...
REALLY?
...
TIME FOR A WATER DUNK!
I TOLD YOU, THIS IS VOLLEYBALL!
肉はオレのだぁぁぁ
THE MEAT IS MIIINE!
YOU GUYS ARE TAKING TOO MUCH!
HERE! ♥ GIRLS GET A DIFFERENT PLATE! ♥
ガオオオ
ARRRGHH!

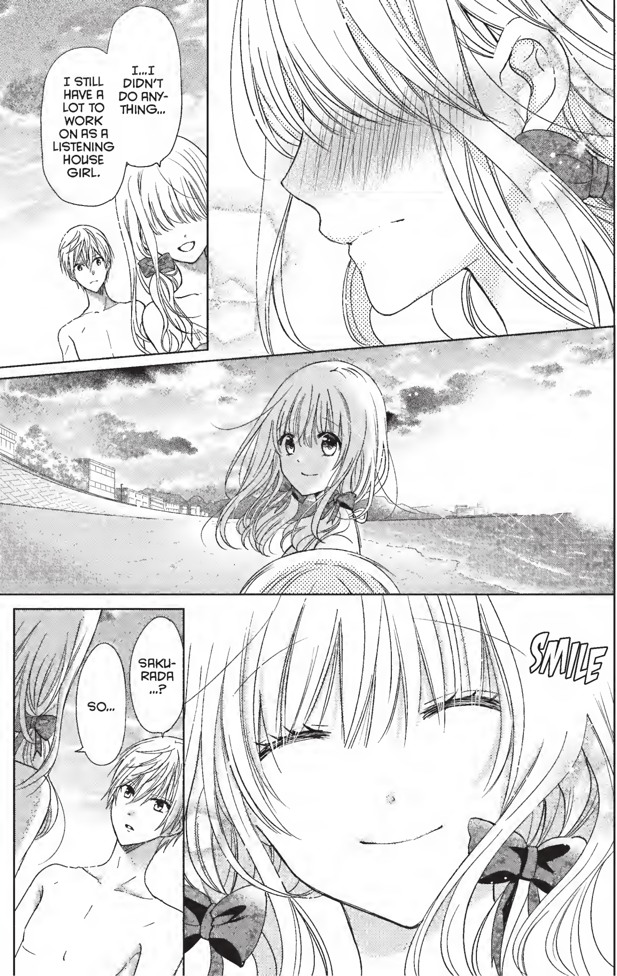

CHEER CHEER
...
CHOMP CHOMP
YOU LOOK GOOD IN THAT SWIMSUIT TOO, KYOKO.
HUH?!
NOW YOU MENTION IT?!
WHOOSH
GROAN. ALL THAT PLAYING POOPED US OUT!
FWUMP
ぱたっ
DID YOU GUYS GET A CHANCE TO RELAX?
TOTALLY!
YOU GOTTA WORK...
AS HARD AS YOU PLAY!
I SEE! IN THAT CASE, YOU BETTER WIN THE NEXT GAME, OR I'M GOING TO KILL YOU.
FROM HEAVEN TO HELL...!

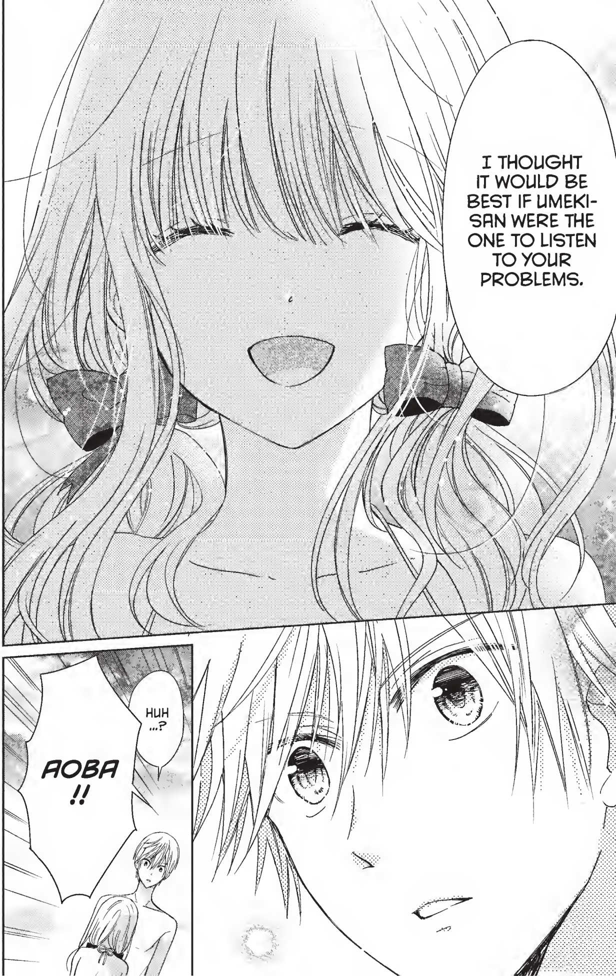

BUT SOUTH HIRATSUKA IS THE TEAM WE'RE FACING NEXT...
I HOPE WE'LL BE OKAY...
...
WHISPER ...
UH... AOBA-KUN...
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
AFTER I TOOK UMEKI-SAN HOME...
OH! DID ASUKA SAY SOMETHING?
HUH? UH, NO! SHE DIDN'T!

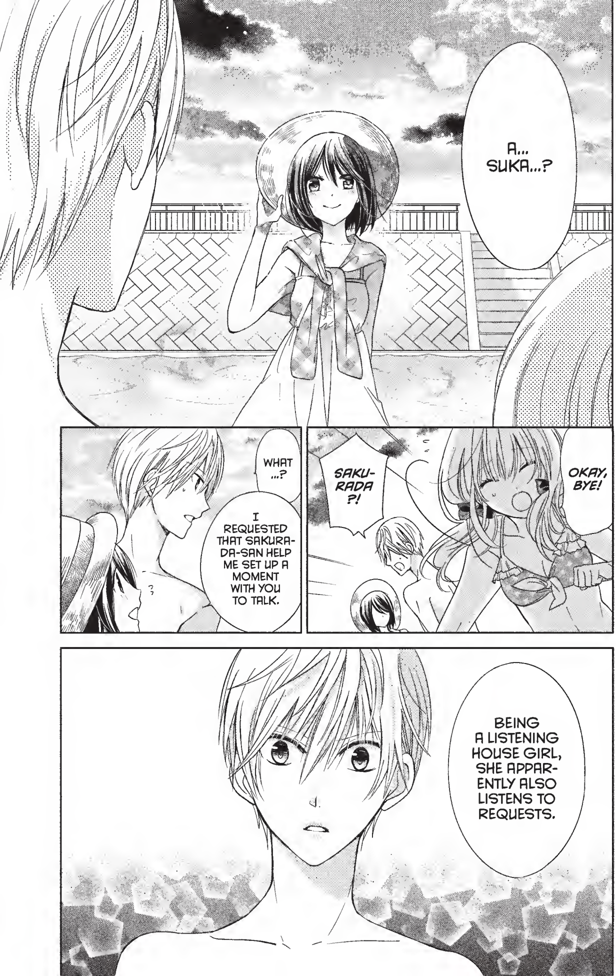

I SEE... THAT'S A RELIEF...
PHEW...
'CAUSE SHE KNOWS EVERYTHING...
SO HE REALLY DOESN'T WANT TO TELL ME...
TAP
AOBA-KUN...

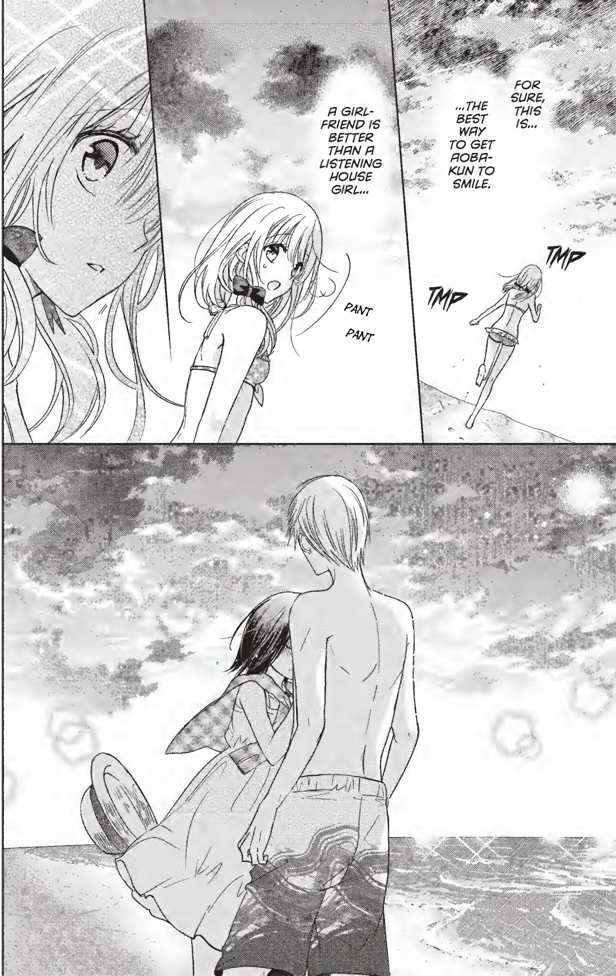

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME WITH ME TO BUY SOME JUICE?
ザーッ!!
FWOOSH
WE'VE SEPARATED FROM EVERYONE ELSE...
U-UM! WE'RE ALMOST THERE!

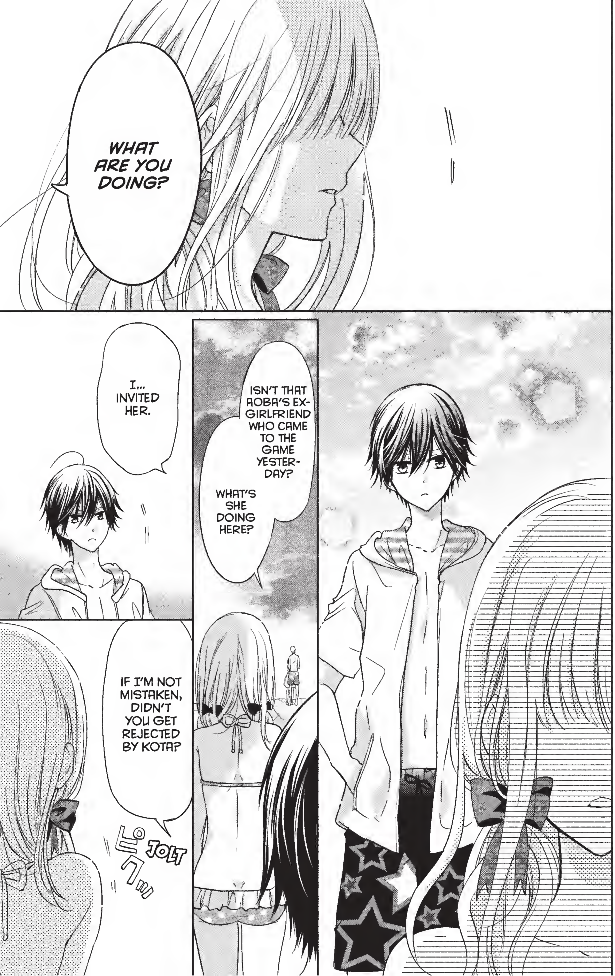

THANKS...
...FOR BUILDING UP THE COURAGE TO DO WHAT YOU DID.
IF YOU WEREN'T CHEERING FOR ME...
...I DON'T THINK I WOULD'VE RECOVERED.

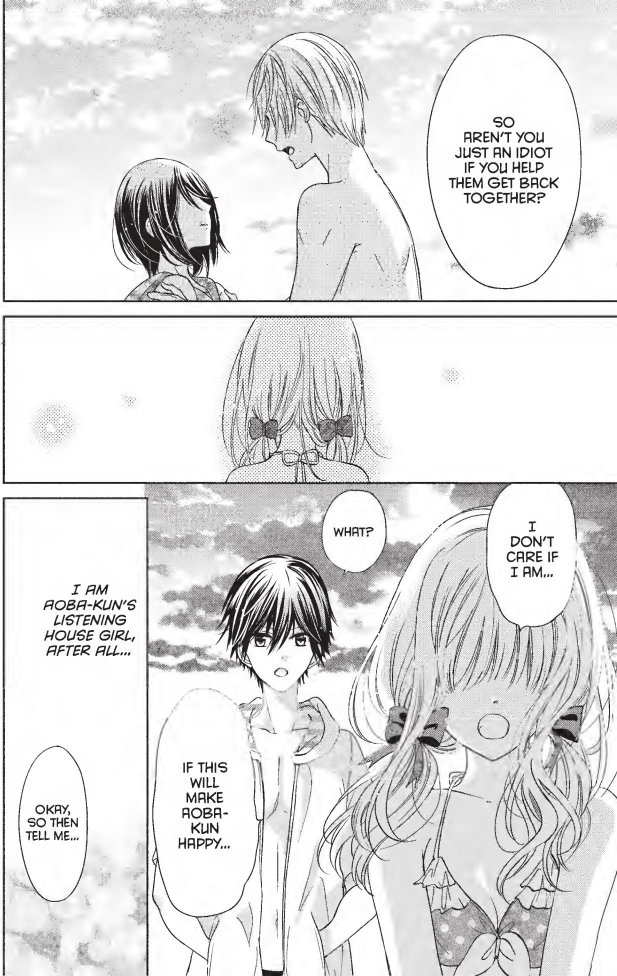

I...I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING...
I STILL HAVE A LOT TO WORK ON AS A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL.
SMILE
SAKURADA...?
SO...

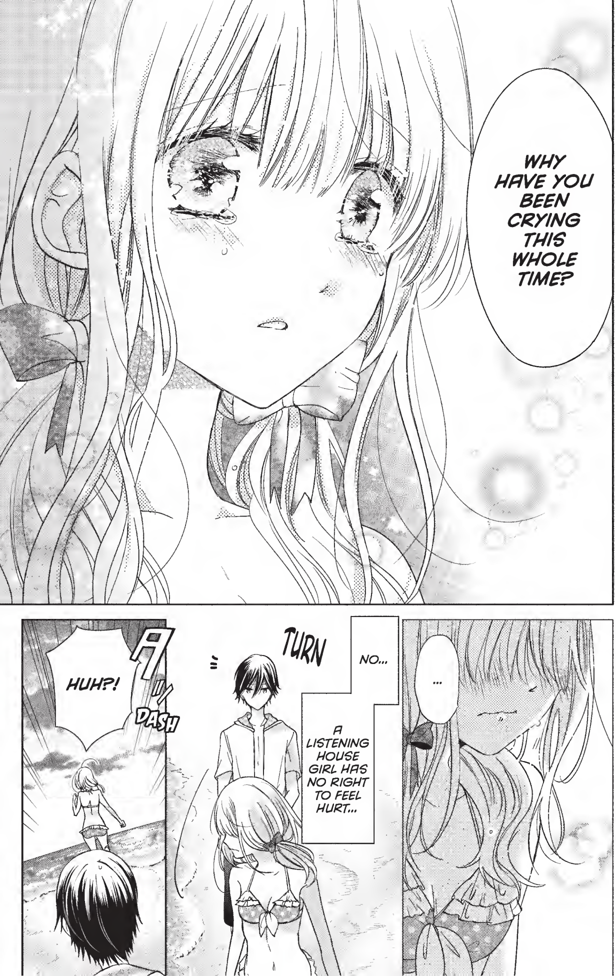

I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST IF UMEKI-SAN WERE THE ONE TO LISTEN TO YOUR PROBLEMS.
HUH ...?
AOBA !!

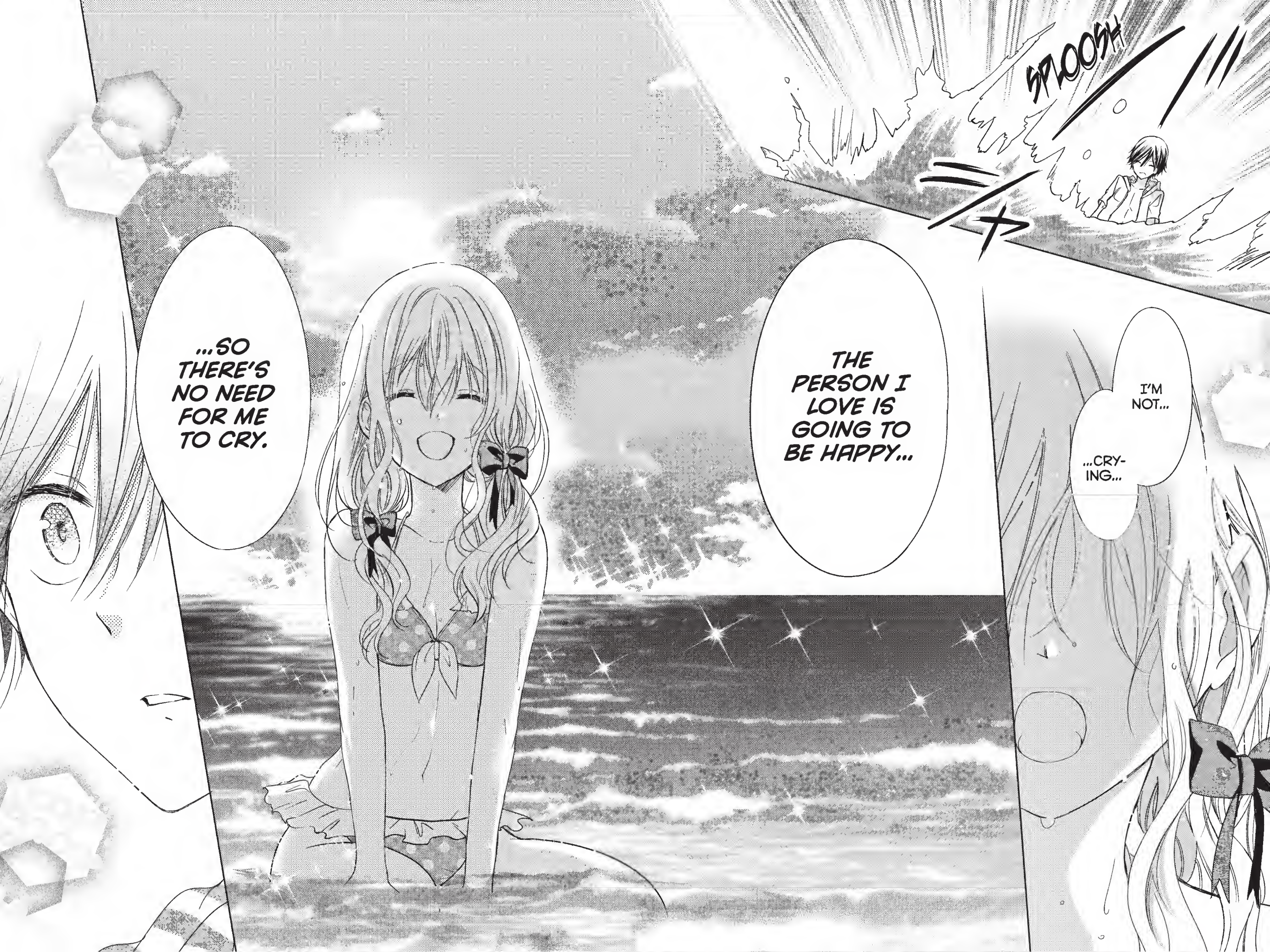

A... SUKA...?
OKAY, BYE!
SAKURADA?!
WHAT ...?
I REQUESTED THAT SAKURADA-SAN HELP ME SET UP A MOMENT WITH YOU TO TALK.
BEING A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL, SHE APPARENTLY ALSO LISTENS TO REQUESTS.

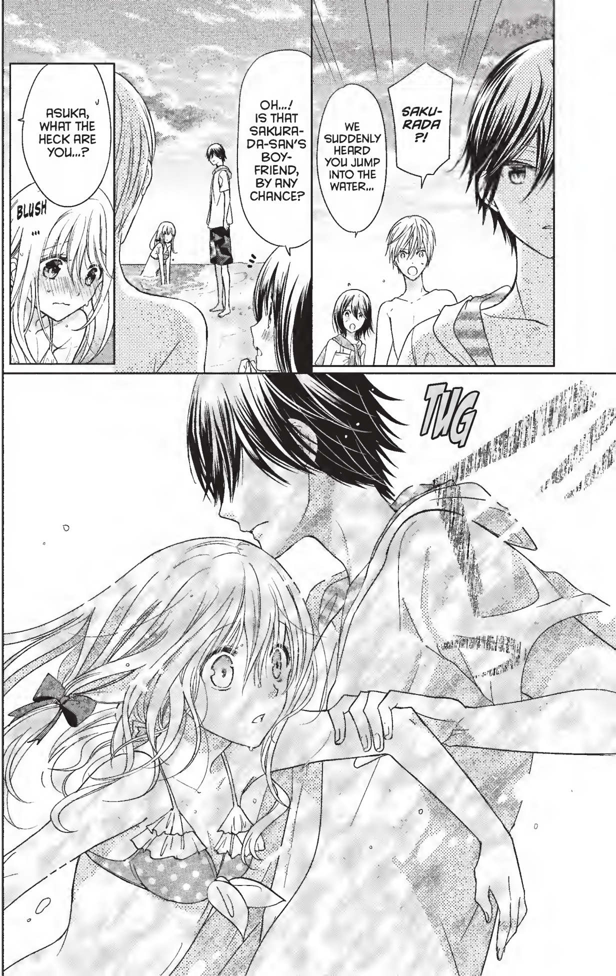

FOR SURE, THIS IS...
...THE BEST WAY TO GET AOBA-KUN TO SMILE.
TMP
TMP
A GIRLFRIEND IS BETTER THAN A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL...
PANT
PANT

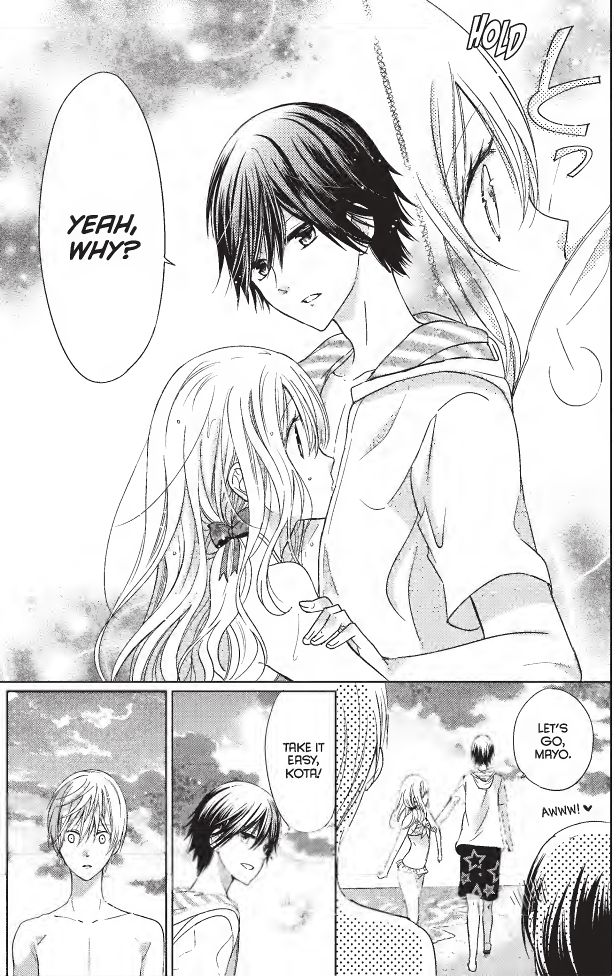

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ISN'T THAT AOBA'S EX-GIRLFRIEND WHO CAME TO THE GAME YESTERDAY?
WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?
I... INVITED HER.
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, DIDN'T YOU GET REJECTED BY KOTA?
ピクッ
JOLT

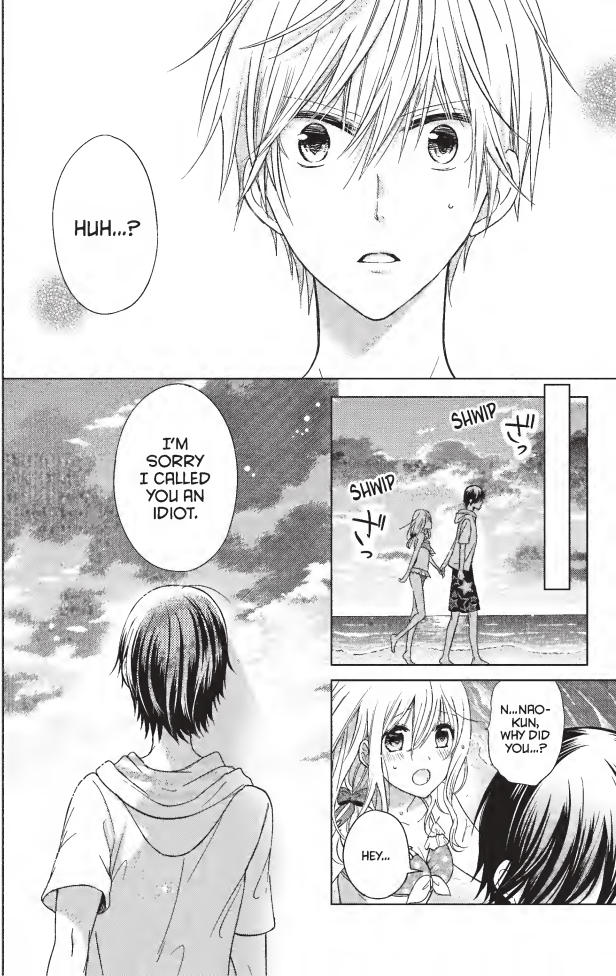

SO AREN'T YOU JUST AN IDIOT IF YOU HELP THEM GET BACK TOGETHER?
I DON'T CARE IF I AM...
WHAT?
I AM AOBA-KUN'S LISTENING HOUSE GIRL, AFTER ALL...
IF THIS WILL MAKE AOBA-KUN HAPPY...
OKAY, SO THEN TELL ME...

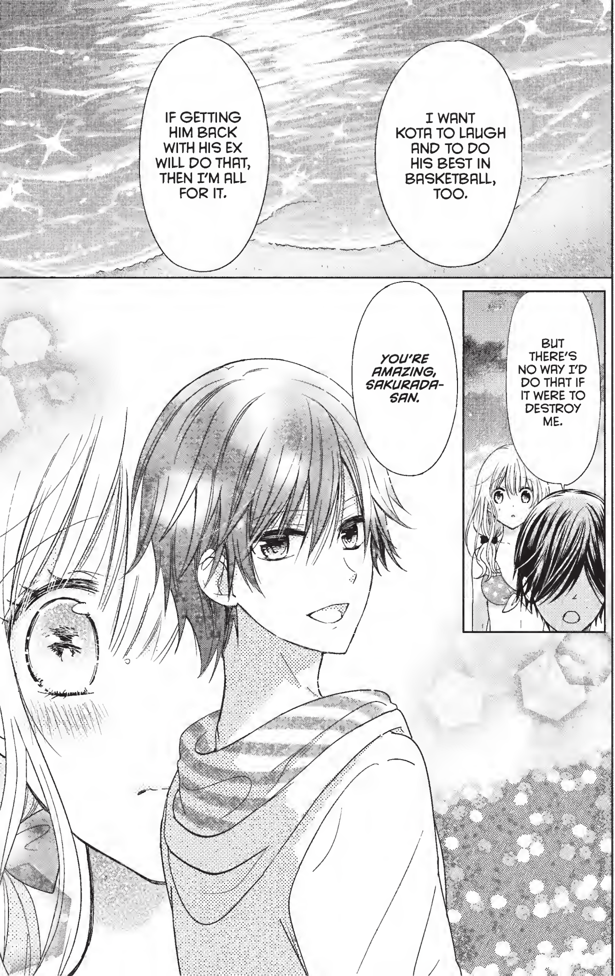

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN CRYING THIS WHOLE TIME?
...
NO...
A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL HAS NO RIGHT TO FEEL HURT...
TURN
A
DASH
HUH?!

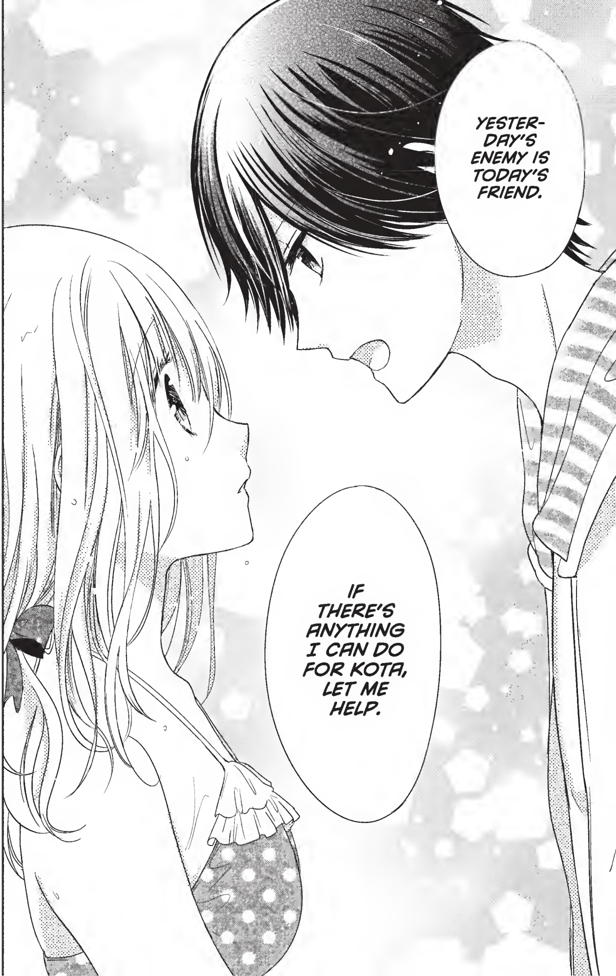

SPLOOSH
I'M NOT...
...CRYING...
THE PERSON I LOVE IS GOING TO BE HAPPY...
...SO THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO CRY.

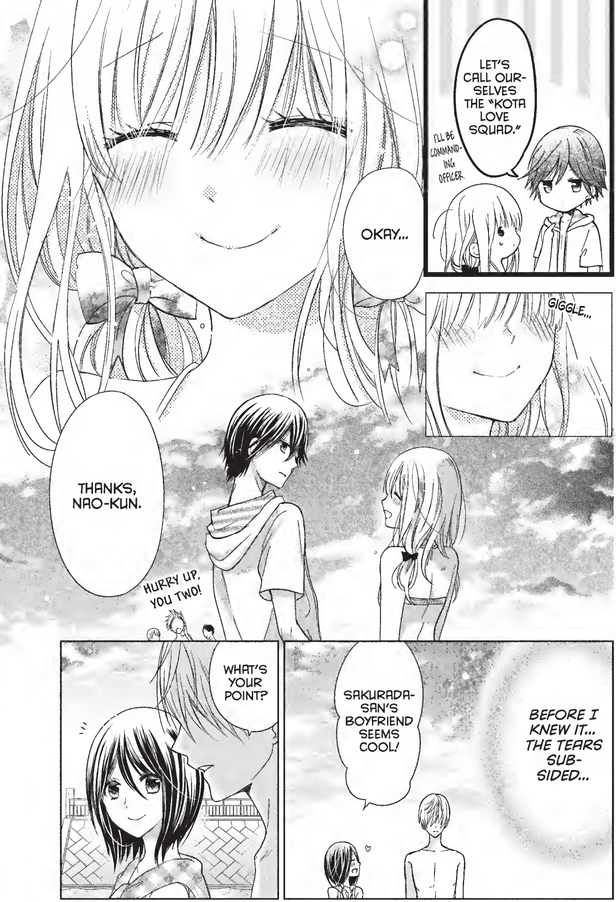

SAKURADA?!
WE SUDDENLY HEARD YOU JUMP INTO THE WATER...
OH...! IS THAT SAKURADA-SAN'S BOYFRIEND, BY ANY CHANCE?
ASUKA, WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU...?
BLUSH
...
TUG

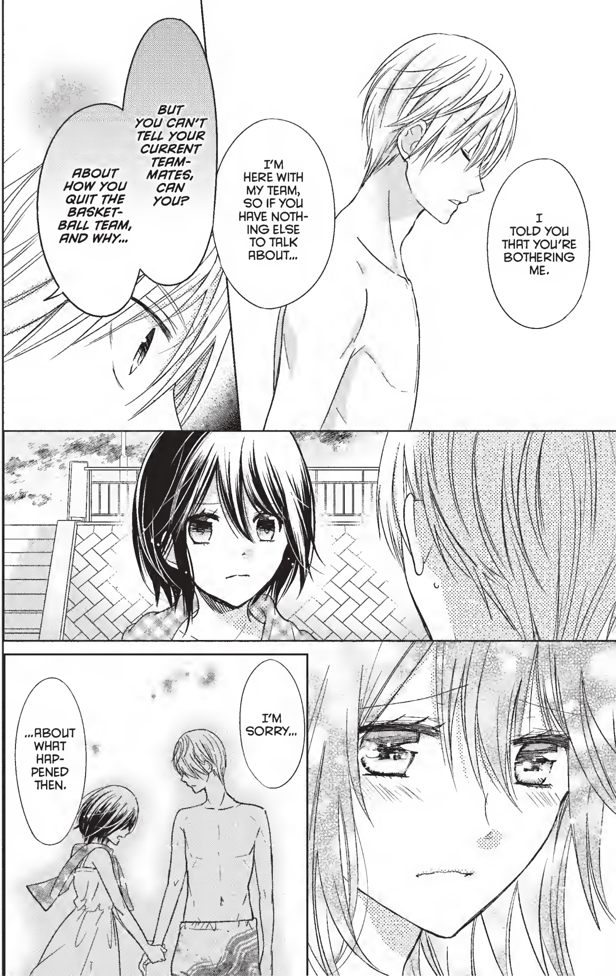

HOLD
とっ
YEAH, WHY?
LET'S GO, MAYO.
AWWW! ♥
TAKE IT EASY, KOTA!

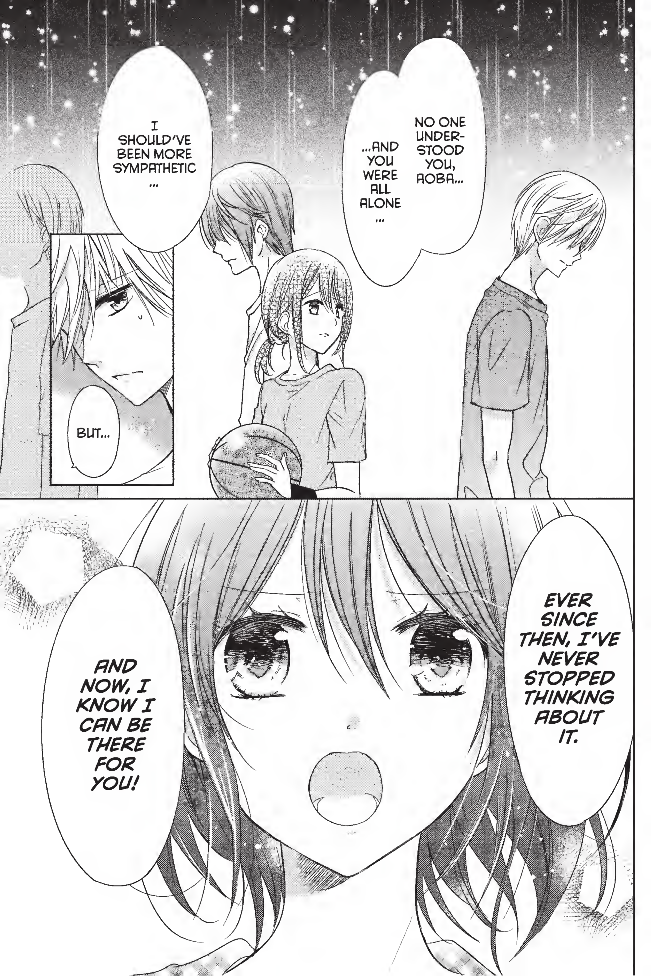

HUH...?
SHWIP
ザッ
SHWIP
ザッ
N...NAO-KUN, WHY DID YOU...?
HEY...
I'M SORRY I CALLED YOU AN IDIOT.

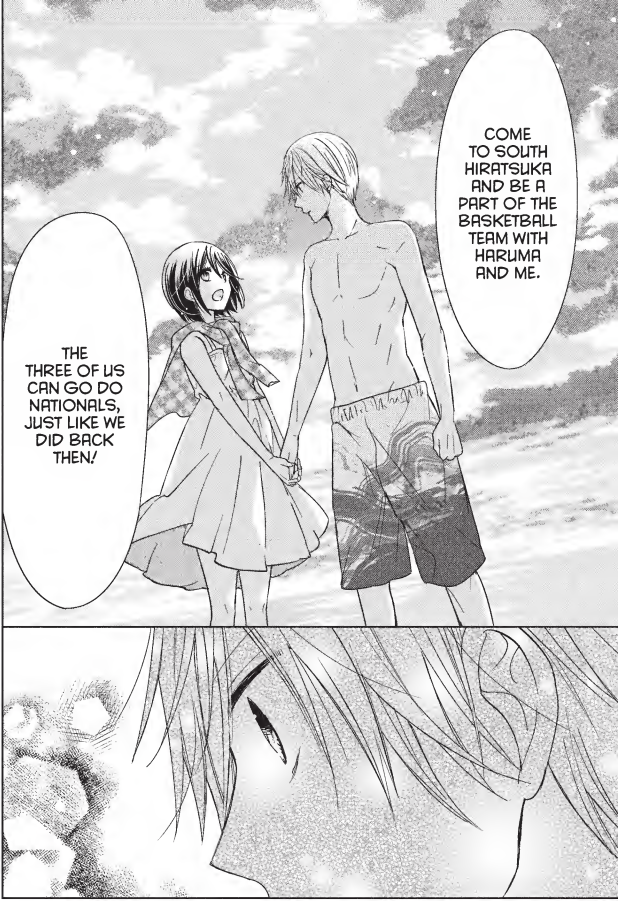

I WANT KOTA TO LAUGH AND TO DO HIS BEST IN BASKETBALL, TOO.
IF GETTING HIM BACK WITH HIS EX WILL DO THAT, THEN I'M ALL FOR IT.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY I'D DO THAT IF IT WERE TO DESTROY ME.
YOU'RE AMAZING, SAKURADA-SAN.


YESTERDAY'S ENEMY IS TODAY'S FRIEND.
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR KOTA, LET ME HELP.


LET'S CALL OURSELVES THE "KOTA LOVE SQUAD."
I'LL BE COMMANDING OFFICER.
OKAY...
GIGGLE...
THANKS, NAO-KUN.
HURRY UP, YOU TWO!
BEFORE I KNEW IT... THE TEARS SUBSIDED...
SAKURADA-SAN'S BOYFRIEND SEEMS COOL!
WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

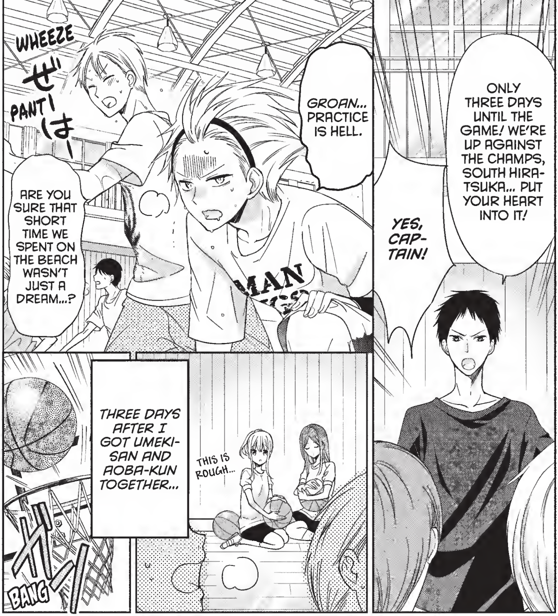

I TOLD YOU THAT YOU'RE BOTHERING ME.
I'M HERE WITH MY TEAM, SO IF YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO TALK ABOUT...
BUT YOU CAN'T TELL YOUR CURRENT TEAMMATES, CAN YOU?
ABOUT HOW YOU QUIT THE BASKETBALL TEAM, AND WHY...
I'M SORRY...
...ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THEN.


NO ONE UNDERSTOOD YOU, AOBA...
...AND YOU WERE ALL ALONE...
I SHOULD'VE BEEN MORE SYMPATHETIC...
BUT...
EVER SINCE THEN, I'VE NEVER STOPPED THINKING ABOUT IT.
AND NOW, I KNOW I CAN BE THERE FOR YOU!

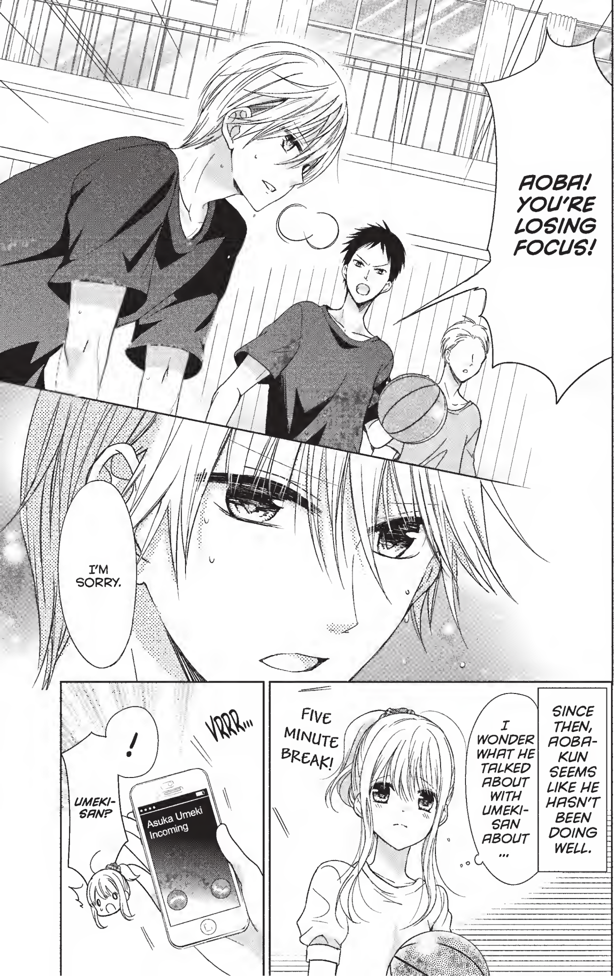

COME TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA AND BE A PART OF THE BASKETBALL TEAM WITH HARUMA AND ME.
THE THREE OF US CAN GO DO NATIONALS, JUST LIKE WE DID BACK THEN!

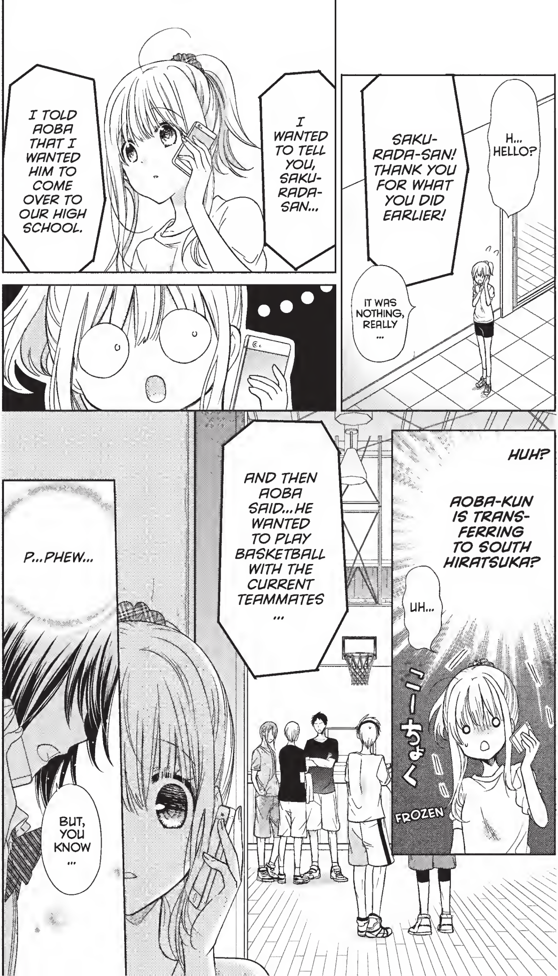
Time.12

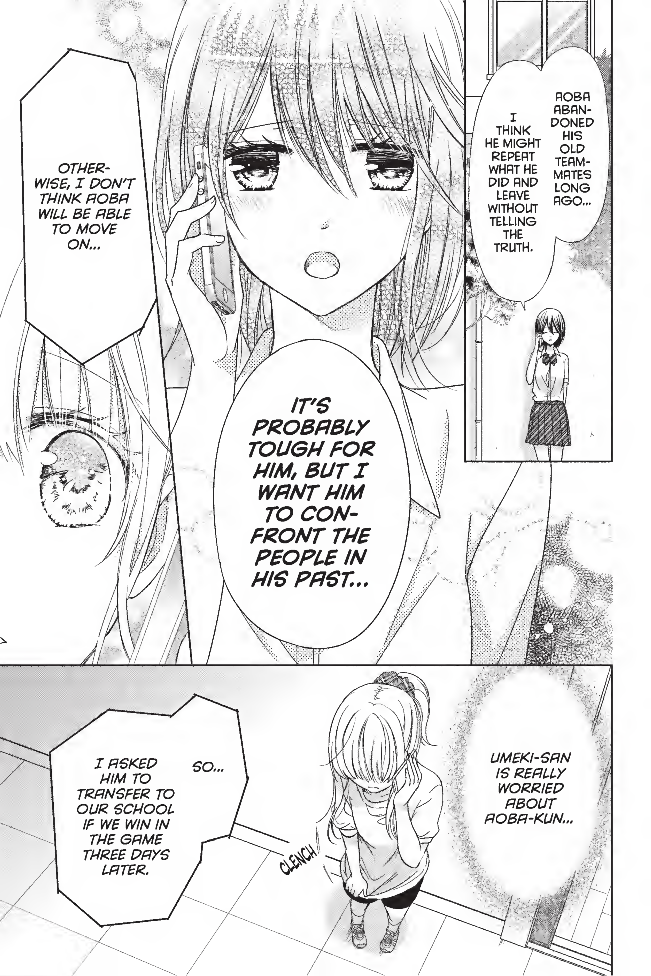
YOU LIKE ME?!

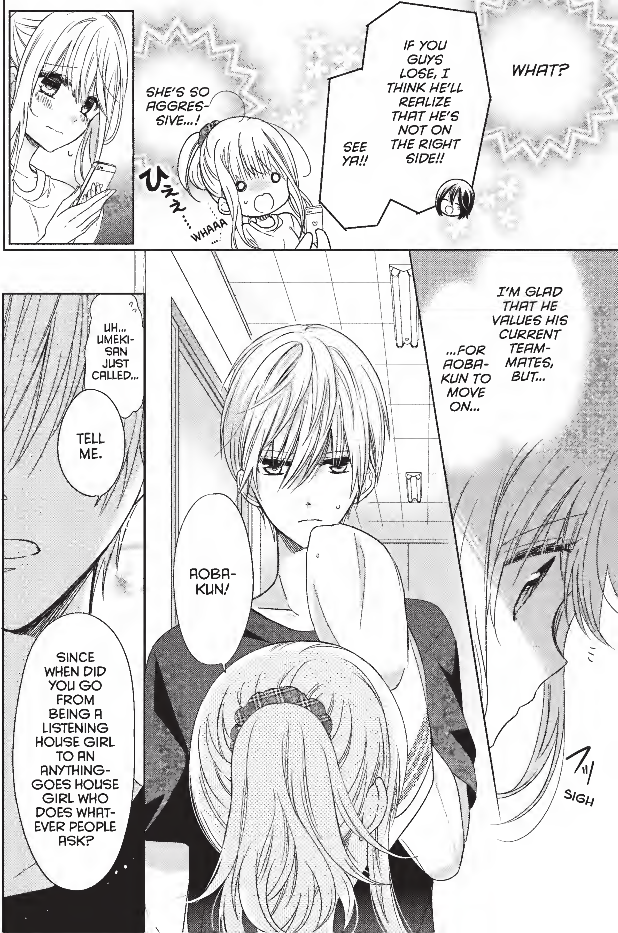

ONLY THREE DAYS UNTIL THE GAME! WE'RE UP AGAINST THE CHAMPS, SOUTH HIRATSUKA... PUT YOUR HEART INTO IT!
YES, CAPTAIN!
GROAN... PRACTICE IS HELL.
WHEEZE
ぜい
PANT
はぃ
ARE YOU SURE THAT SHORT TIME WE SPENT ON THE BEACH WASN'T JUST A DREAM...?
THREE DAYS AFTER I GOT UMEKI-SAN AND AOBA-KUN TOGETHER...
THIS IS ROUGH...
ガン
BANG

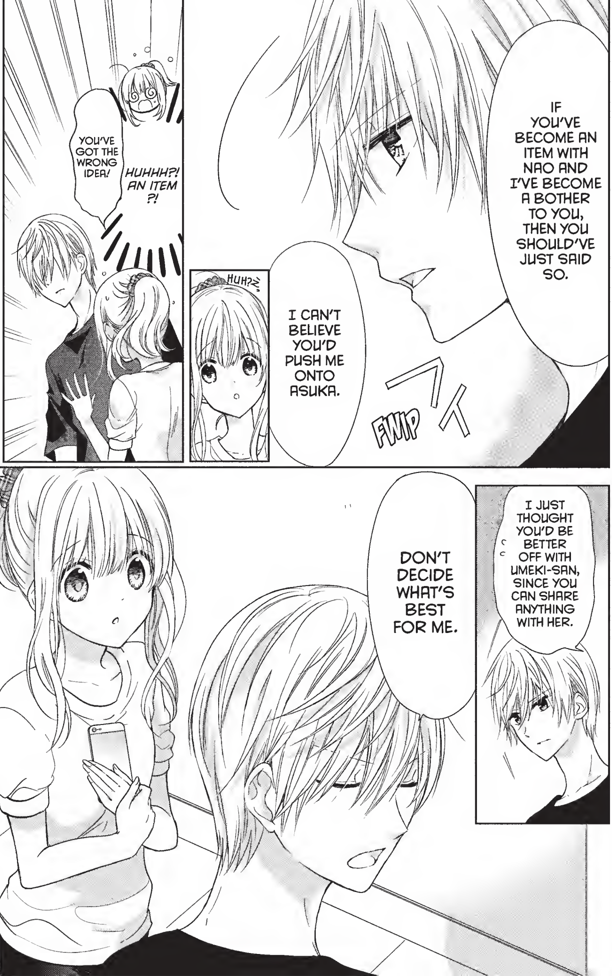
AOBA-KUN'S CONFESSIONS

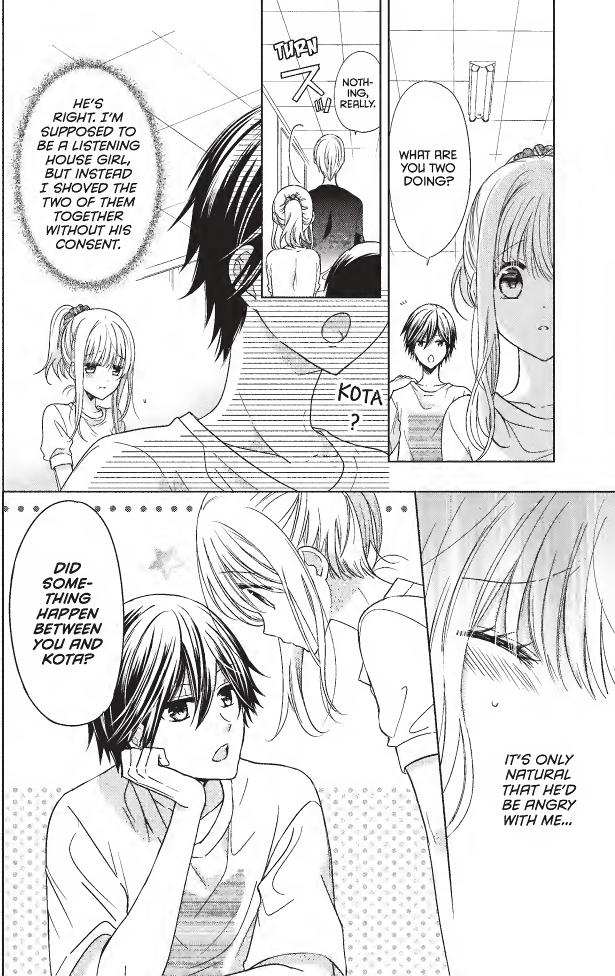

AOBA! YOU'RE LOSING FOCUS!
I'M SORRY.
SINCE THEN, AOBA-KUN SEEMS LIKE HE HASN'T BEEN DOING WELL.
I WONDER WHAT HE TALKED ABOUT WITH UMEKI-SAN ABOUT ...
FIVE MINUTE BREAK!
VRRR...
!
UMEKI-SAN?
Asuka Umeki Incoming

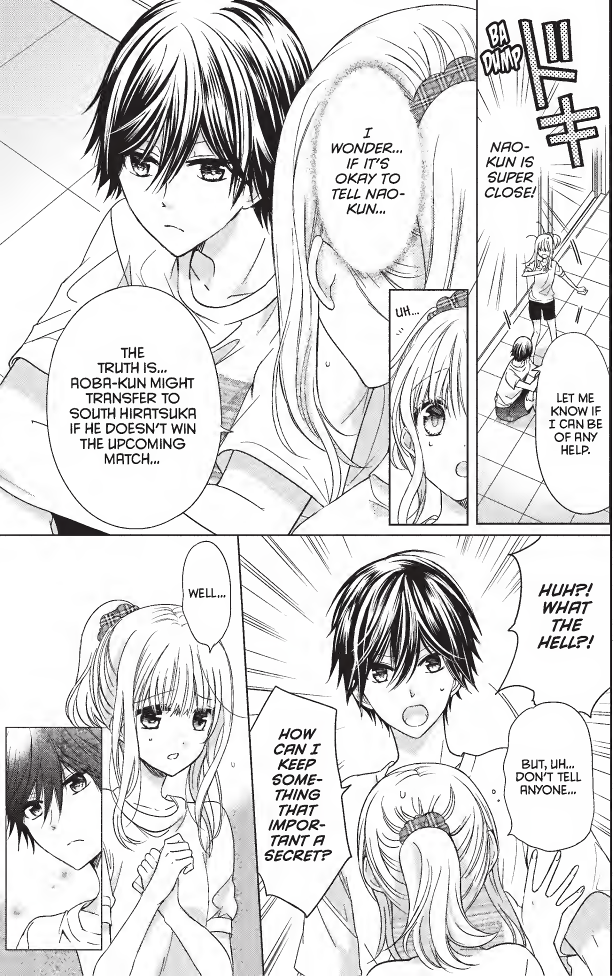

H... HELLO?
SAKURADA-SAN! THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID EARLIER!
IT WAS NOTHING, REALLY ...
I WANTED TO TELL YOU, SAKURADA-SAN...
I TOLD AOBA THAT I WANTED HIM TO COME OVER TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL.
HUH?
AOBA-KUN IS TRANSFERRING TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA?
UH...
こーちょく
FROZEN
AND THEN AOBA SAID...HE WANTED TO PLAY BASKETBALL WITH THE CURRENT TEAMMATES ...
P...PHEW...
BUT, YOU KNOW ...

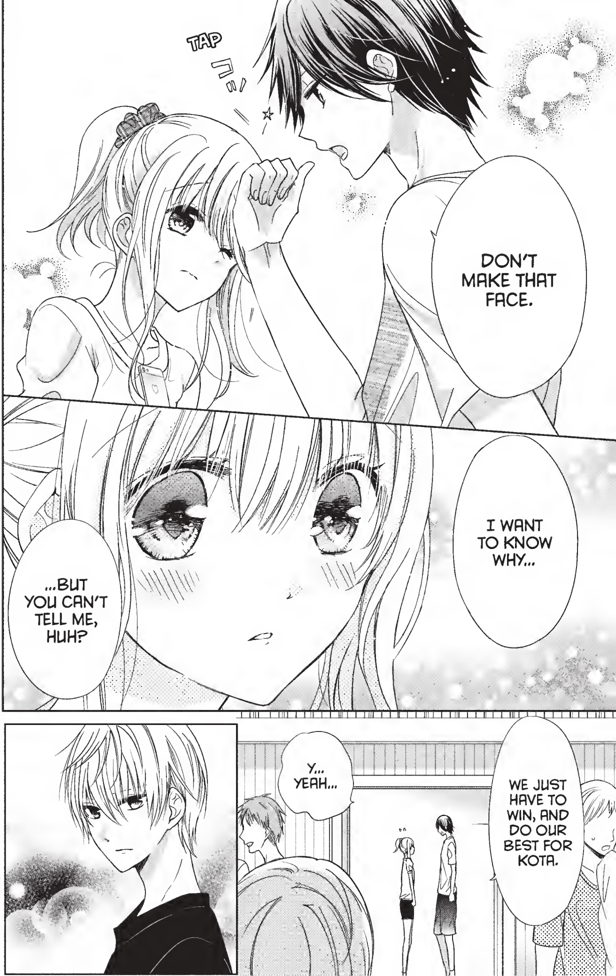

AOBA ABANDONED HIS OLD TEAMMATES LONG AGO...
I THINK HE MIGHT REPEAT WHAT HE DID AND LEAVE WITHOUT TELLING THE TRUTH.
IT'S PROBABLY TOUGH FOR HIM, BUT I WANT HIM TO CONFRONT THE PEOPLE IN HIS PAST...
OTHERWISE, I DON'T THINK AOBA WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE ON...
UMEKI-SAN IS REALLY WORRIED ABOUT AOBA-KUN...
CLENCH
SO...
I ASKED HIM TO TRANSFER TO OUR SCHOOL IF WE WIN IN THE GAME THREE DAYS LATER.


WHAT?
IF YOU GUYS LOSE, I THINK HE'LL REALIZE THAT HE'S NOT ON THE RIGHT SIDE!!
SEE YA!!
SHE'S SO AGGRESSIVE...!
ひぇぇ…
WHAAA...
I'M GLAD THAT HE VALUES HIS CURRENT TEAMMATES, BUT...
...FOR AOBA-KUN TO MOVE ON...
フッ
SIGH
AOBA-KUN!
UH... UMEKI-SAN JUST CALLED...
TELL ME.
SINCE WHEN DID YOU GO FROM BEING A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL TO AN ANYTHING-GOES HOUSE GIRL WHO DOES WHATEVER PEOPLE ASK?


IF YOU'VE BECOME AN ITEM WITH NAO AND I'VE BECOME A BOTHER TO YOU, THEN YOU SHOULD'VE JUST SAID SO.
FWIP
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'D PUSH ME ONTO ASUKA.
HUH?
HUHHH?! AN ITEM ?!
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA!
I JUST THOUGHT YOU'D BE BETTER OFF WITH UMEKI-SAN, SINCE YOU CAN SHARE ANYTHING WITH HER.
DON'T DECIDE WHAT'S BEST FOR ME.


WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING?
KOTA?
TURN
ス
NOTHING, REALLY.
HE'S RIGHT. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A LISTENING HOUSE GIRL, BUT INSTEAD I SHOVED THE TWO OF THEM TOGETHER WITHOUT HIS CONSENT.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT HE'D BE ANGRY WITH ME...
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU AND KOTA?


BA DUMP
ドキ
NAO-KUN IS SUPER CLOSE!
LET ME KNOW IF I CAN BE OF ANY HELP.
UH...
I WONDER... IF IT'S OKAY TO TELL NAO-KUN...
THE TRUTH IS... AOBA-KUN MIGHT TRANSFER TO SOUTH HIRATSUKA IF HE DOESN'T WIN THE UPCOMING MATCH...
HUH?! WHAT THE HELL?!
BUT, UH... DON'T TELL ANYONE...
HOW CAN I KEEP SOMETHING THAT IMPORTANT A SECRET?
WELL...

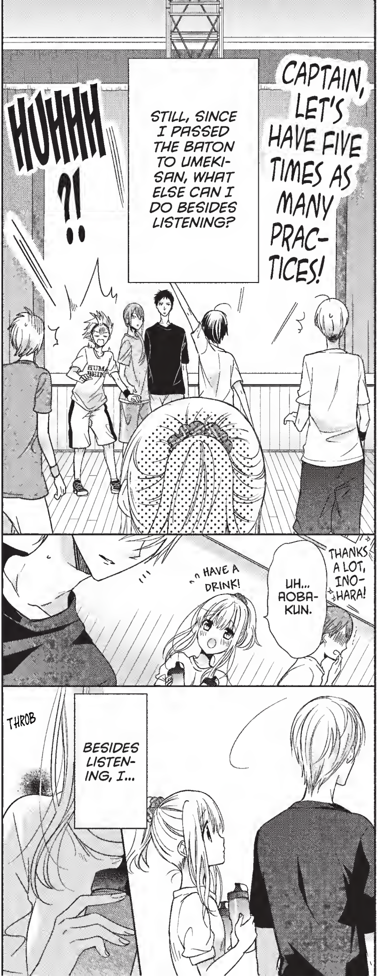

TAP
コッ
DON'T MAKE THAT FACE.
I WANT TO KNOW WHY...
...BUT YOU CAN'T TELL ME, HUH?
WE JUST HAVE TO WIN, AND DO OUR BEST FOR KOTA.
Y... YEAH...

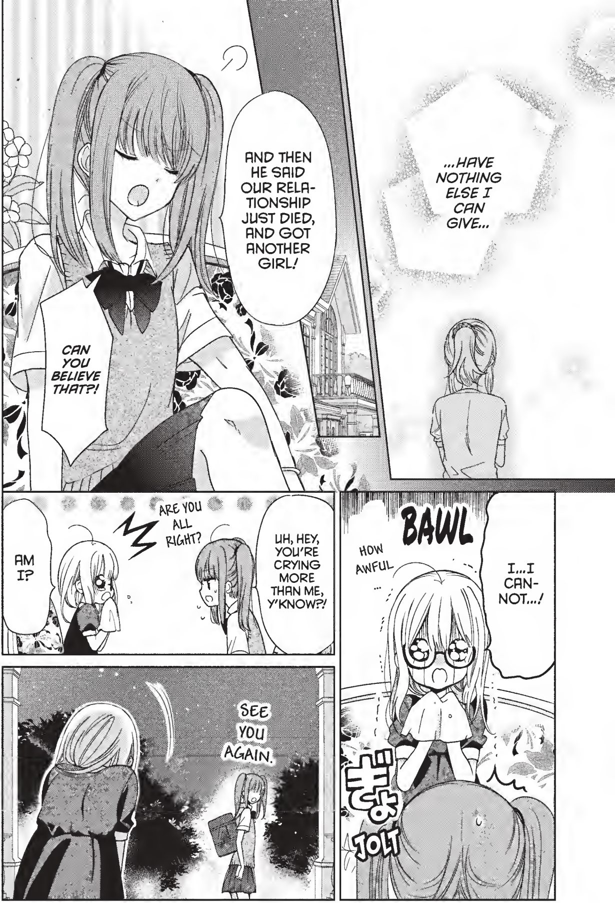
AND SO... IN THIS SLOPE-HEAVY TOWN, I LIVED WITH A CAT, AND NOW, THERE ARE TWO MORE CATS HERE! THE ONLY FEMALE IN THE GROUP IS A BLACK CAT NAMED UNI-CHAN (SINCE SHE'S BLACK). IT'S BEEN NINE MONTHS SINCE SHE WAS BORN, AND SHE WON'T LET ME GET ANY WORK DONE. IT'S BAD!

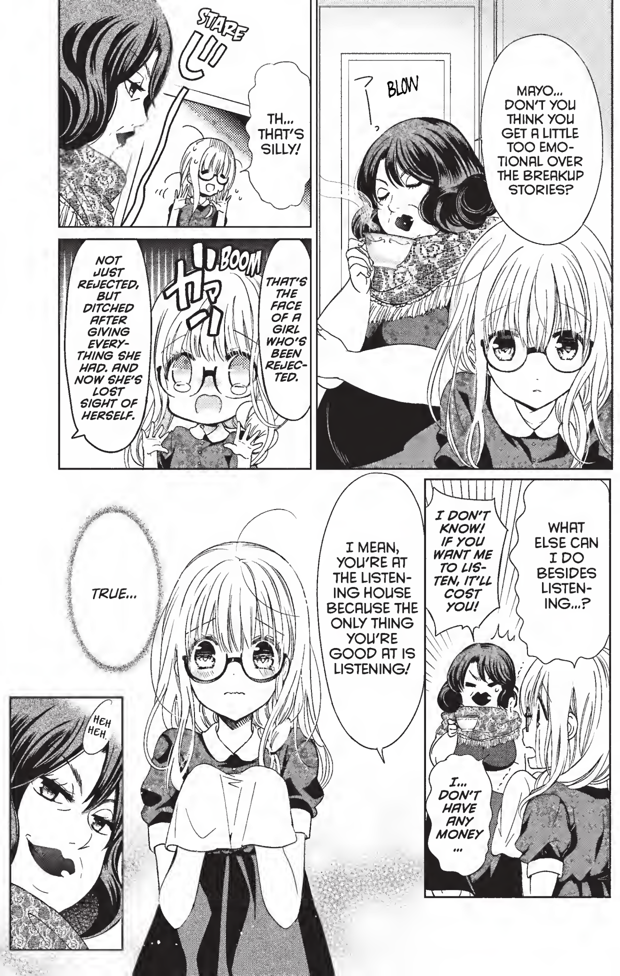
OTHER THAN SLEEPING, SHE JUMPS ON TOP OF ME AND ASKS ME TO PLAY WITH HER IN A SUPER HIGH-PITCHED VOICE. AND I CAN'T GET HER MEOWS OUT OF MY HEAD...!

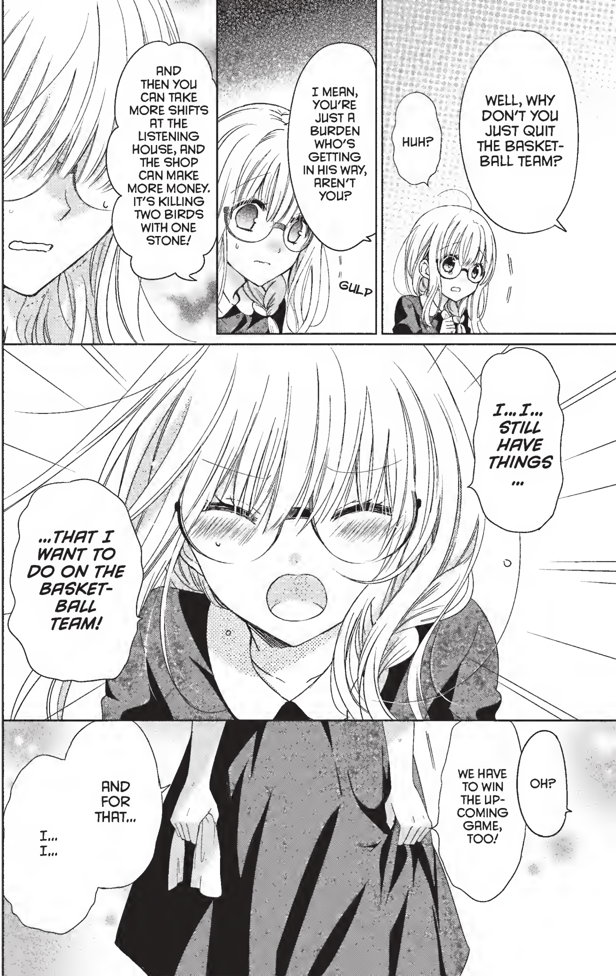
I HOPE SHE HURRIES UP AN GROWS INTO A MATURE FEMALE CAT.

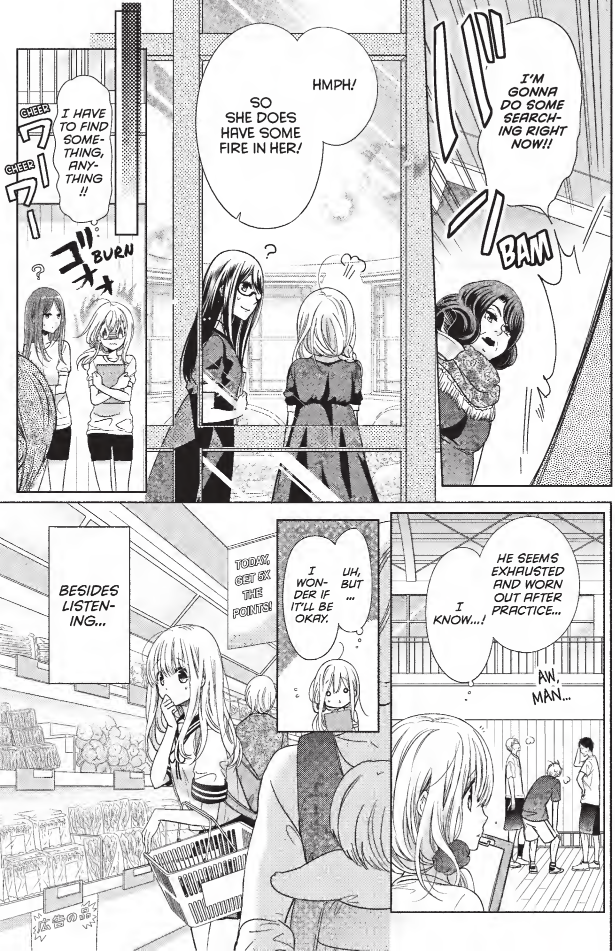
AND I SOMEHOW FILLED UP THIS SPACE. THANKS TO THOSE WHO READ IT!

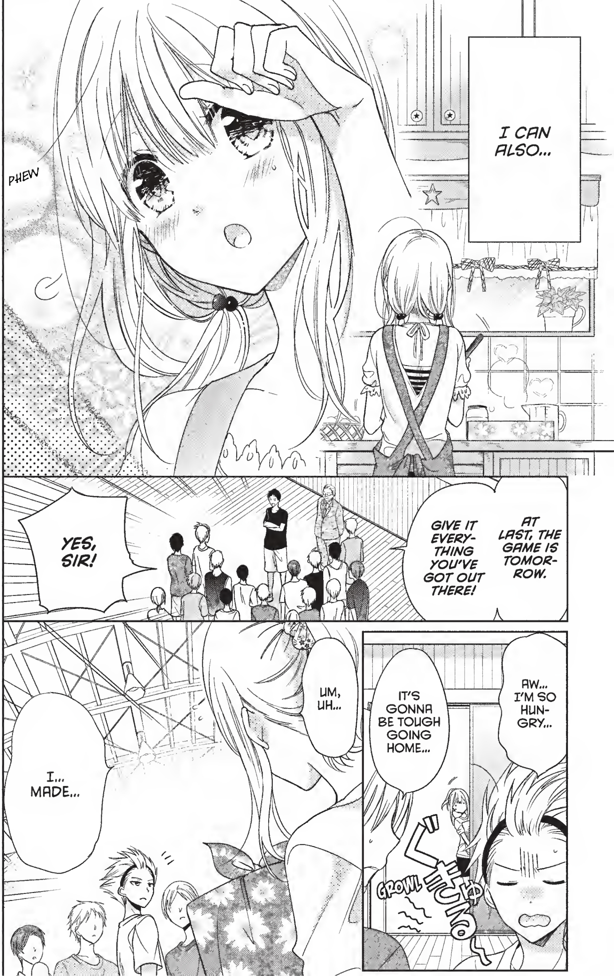

CAPTAIN, LET'S HAVE FIVE TIMES AS MANY PRAC-TICES!
STILL, SINCE I PASSED THE BATON TO UMEKI-SAN, WHAT ELSE CAN I DO BESIDES LISTENING?
HUHHH ?!
THANKS A LOT, INO-HARA!
UH... AOBA-KUN.
HAVE A DRINK!
BESIDES LISTEN-ING, I...
THROB

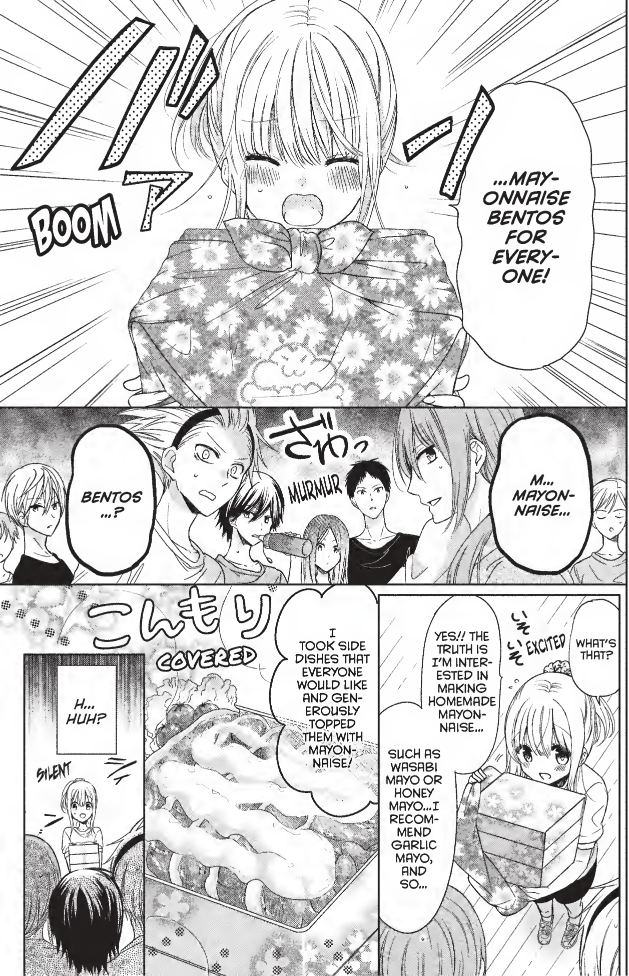

...HAVE NOTHING ELSE I CAN GIVE...
AND THEN HE SAID OUR RELATIONSHIP JUST DIED, AND GOT ANOTHER GIRL!
CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?!
BAWL
I...I CANNOT...!
HOW AWFUL ...
ぎょ
JOLT
UH, HEY, YOU'RE CRYING MORE THAN ME, Y'KNOW?!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AM I?
SEE YOU AGAIN.

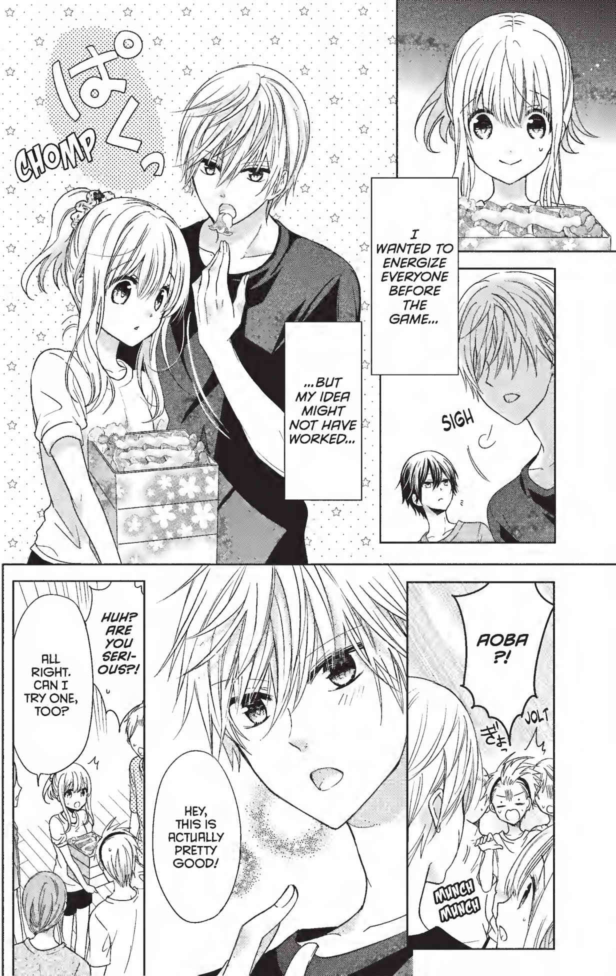

BLOW
MAYO... DON'T YOU THINK YOU GET A LITTLE TOO EMOTIONAL OVER THE BREAKUP STORIES?
STARE
じぃ
TH... THAT'S SILLY!
BOOM
THAT'S THE FACE OF A GIRL WHO'S BEEN REJECTED.
NOT JUST REJECTED, BUT DITCHED AFTER GIVING EVERYTHING SHE HAD. AND NOW SHE'S LOST SIGHT OF HERSELF.
WHAT ELSE CAN I DO BESIDES LISTENING...?
I DON'T KNOW! IF YOU WANT ME TO LISTEN, IT'LL COST YOU!
I... DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY...
I MEAN, YOU'RE AT THE LISTENING HOUSE BECAUSE THE ONLY THING YOU'RE GOOD AT IS LISTENING!
TRUE...
HEH HEH.

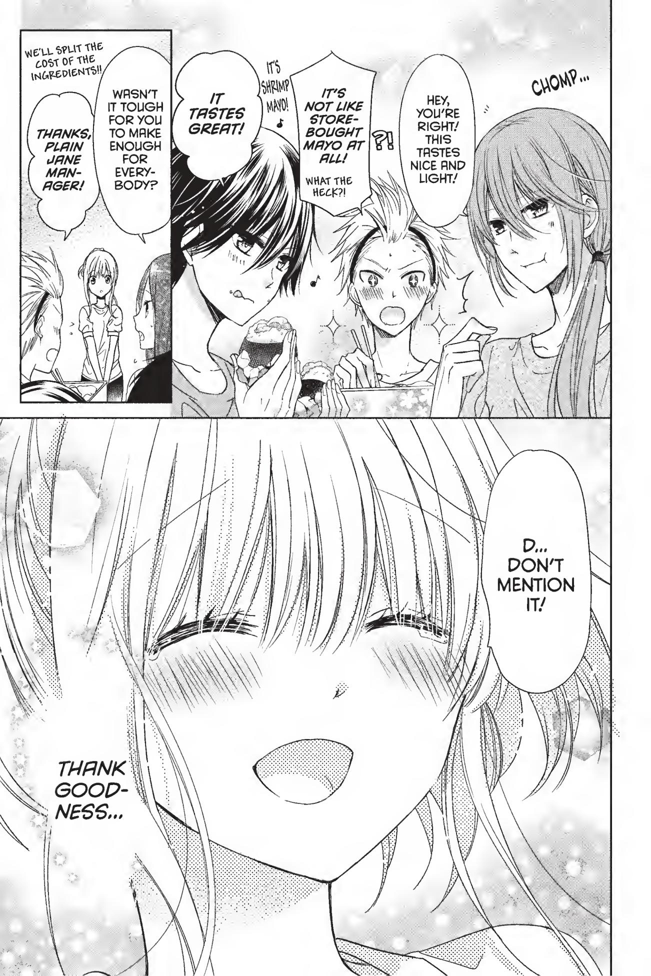

WELL, WHY DON'T YOU JUST QUIT THE BASKETBALL TEAM?
HUH?
I MEAN, YOU'RE JUST A BURDEN WHO'S GETTING IN HIS WAY, AREN'T YOU?
GULP
AND THEN YOU CAN TAKE MORE SHIFTS AT THE LISTENING HOUSE, AND THE SHOP CAN MAKE MORE MONEY. IT'S KILLING TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE!
I... I... STILL HAVE THINGS ...
...THAT I WANT TO DO ON THE BASKETBALL TEAM!
OH?
WE HAVE TO WIN THE UPCOMING GAME, TOO!
AND FOR THAT...
I... I...

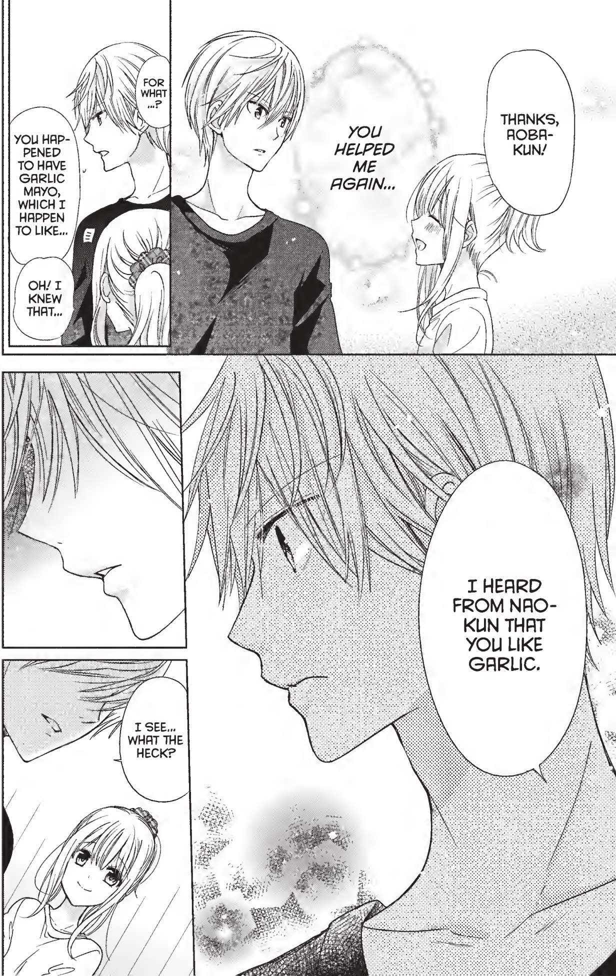

I'M GONNA DO SOME SEARCHING RIGHT NOW!!
BAM
HMPH!
SO SHE DOES HAVE SOME FIRE IN HER!
?
CHEER
CHEER
I HAVE TO FIND SOMETHING, ANYTHING!!
BURN
?
HE SEEMS EXHAUSTED AND WORN OUT AFTER PRACTICE...
I KNOW...!
AW, MAN...
UH, BUT...
I WONDER IF IT'LL BE OKAY.
TODAY, GET 5X THE POINTS!
BESIDES LISTENING...
広告の品

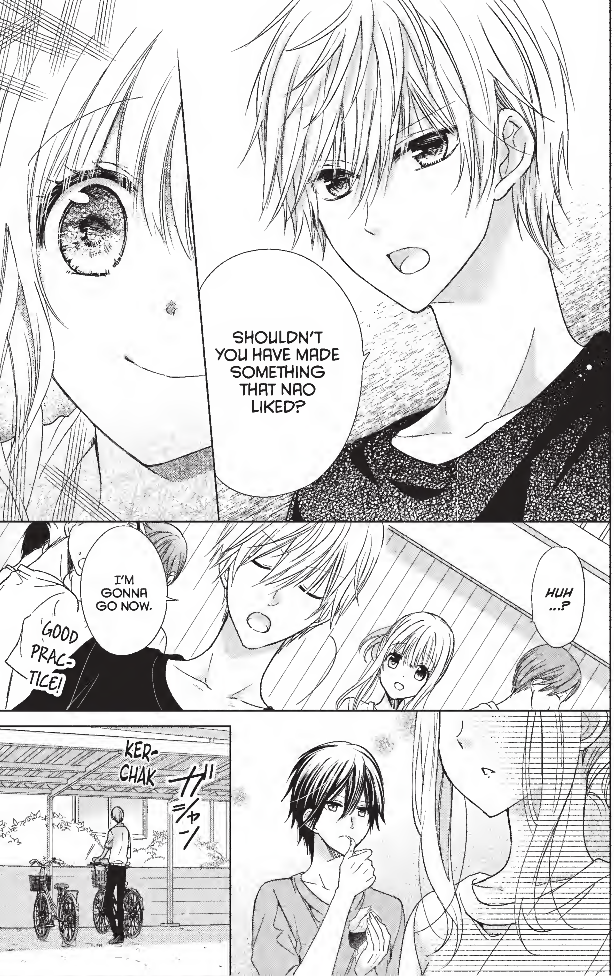

I CAN ALSO...
PHEW
AT LAST, THE GAME IS TOMORROW.
GIVE IT EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT OUT THERE!
YES, SIR!
AW... I'M SO HUNGRY...
IT'S GONNA BE TOUGH GOING HOME...
GROWL
ぐきゅる〜
UM, UH...
I... MADE...

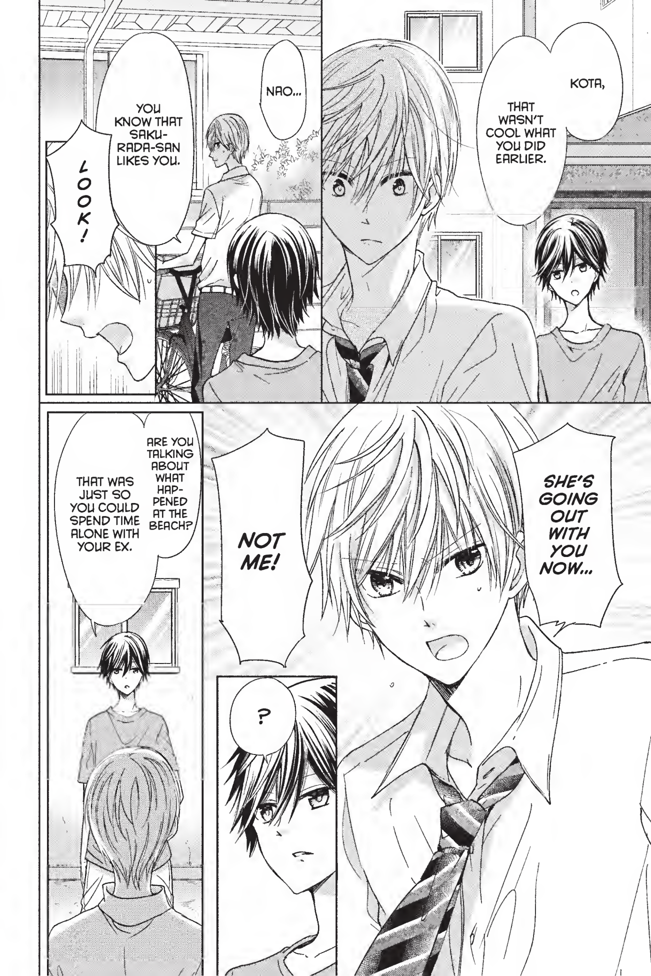

...MAY-ONNAISE BENTOS FOR EVERY-ONE!
BOOM
M... MAYON-NAISE...
ざわっ
MURMUR
BENTOS ...?
WHAT'S THAT?
いそいそ
EXCITED
YES!! THE TRUTH IS I'M INTER-ESTED IN MAKING HOMEMADE MAYON-NAISE...
SUCH AS WASABI MAYO OR HONEY MAYO...I RECOM-MEND GARLIC MAYO, AND SO...
I TOOK SIDE DISHES THAT EVERYONE WOULD LIKE AND GEN-EROUSLY TOPPED THEM WITH MAYON-NAISE!
こんもり
COVERED
H... HUH?
SILENT

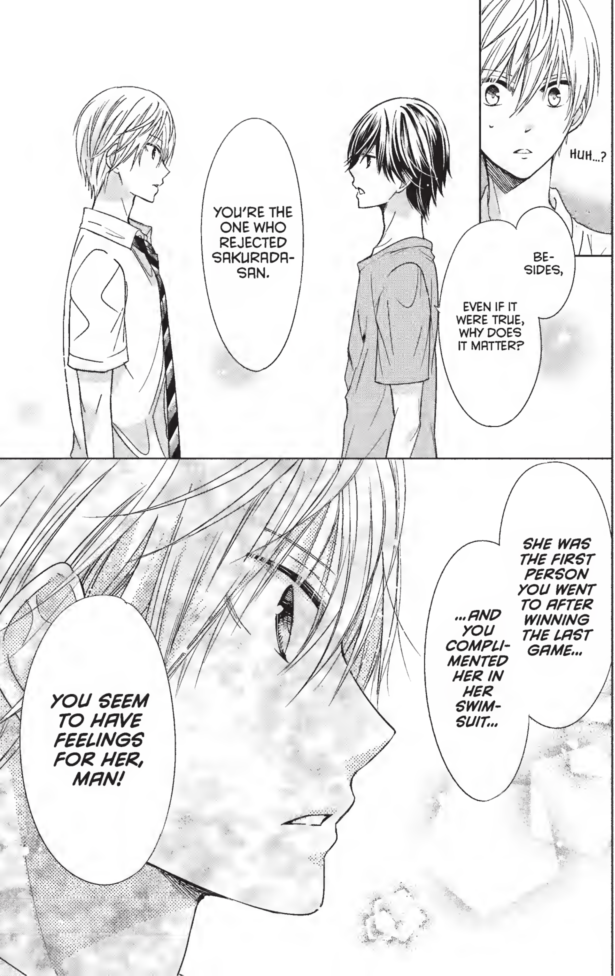

I WANTED TO ENERGIZE EVERYONE BEFORE THE GAME...
SIGH
...BUT MY IDEA MIGHT NOT HAVE WORKED...
ぱくっ
CHOMP
AOBA?!
ぎょっ
JOLT
MUNCH MUNCH
HEY, THIS IS ACTUALLY PRETTY GOOD!
HUH? ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
ALL RIGHT. CAN I TRY ONE, TOO?

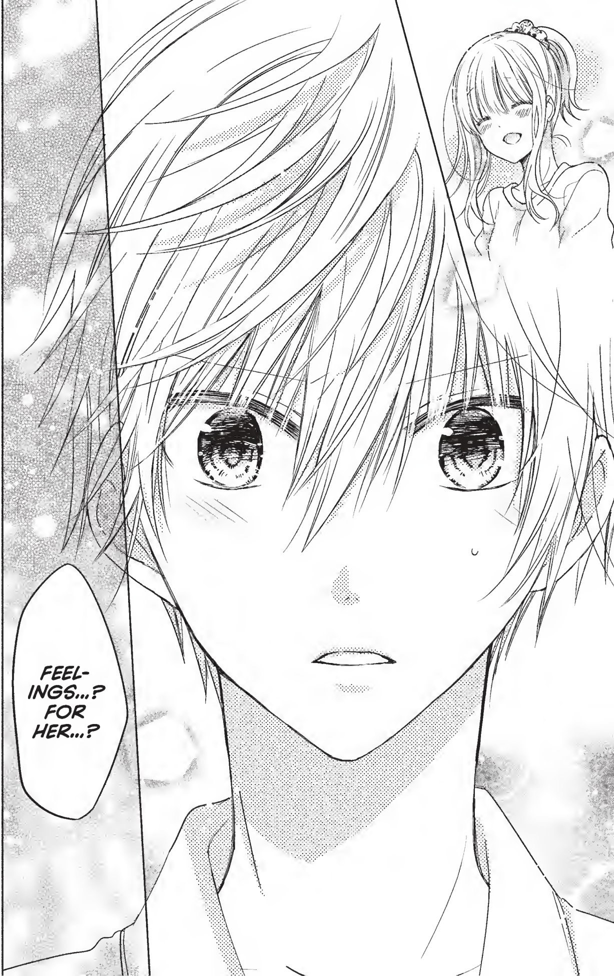

CHOMP...
HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT! THIS TASTES NICE AND LIGHT!
IT'S NOT LIKE STORE-BOUGHT MAYO AT ALL!
?!
WHAT THE HECK?!
IT'S SHRIMP MAYO! ♪
IT TASTES GREAT!
WASN'T IT TOUGH FOR YOU TO MAKE ENOUGH FOR EVERY-BODY?
WE'LL SPLIT THE COST OF THE INGREDIENTS!!
THANKS, PLAIN JANE MAN-AGER!
D... DON'T MENTION IT!
THANK GOOD-NESS...

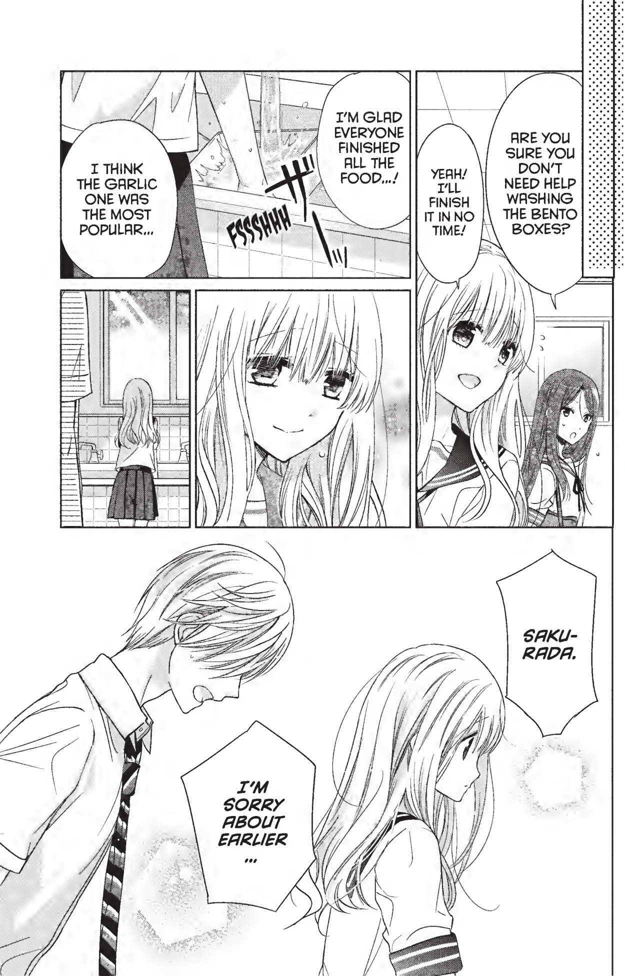

THANKS, AOBA-KUN!
YOU HELPED ME AGAIN...
FOR WHAT ...?
YOU HAPPENED TO HAVE GARLIC MAYO, WHICH I HAPPEN TO LIKE...
OH! I KNEW THAT...
I HEARD FROM NAO-KUN THAT YOU LIKE GARLIC.
I SEE... WHAT THE HECK?

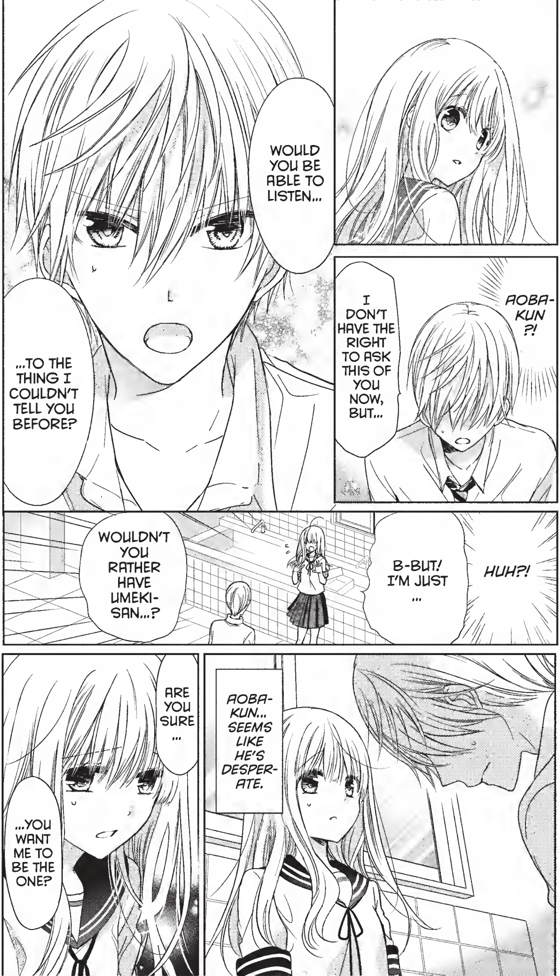

SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE MADE SOMETHING THAT NAO LIKED?
HUH ...?
I'M GONNA GO NOW.
GOOD PRAC-TICE!
KER-CHAK
ガシャン

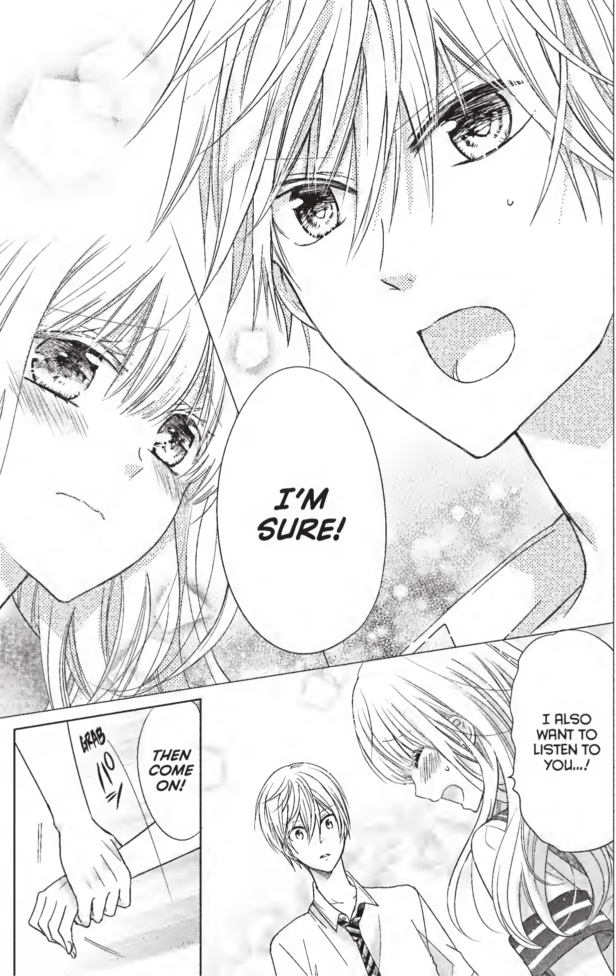

KOTA,
THAT WASN'T COOL WHAT YOU DID EARLIER.
NAO...
YOU KNOW THAT SAKURADA-SAN LIKES YOU.
LOOK!
SHE'S GOING OUT WITH YOU NOW...
NOT ME!
?
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE BEACH?
THAT WAS JUST SO YOU COULD SPEND TIME ALONE WITH YOUR EX.

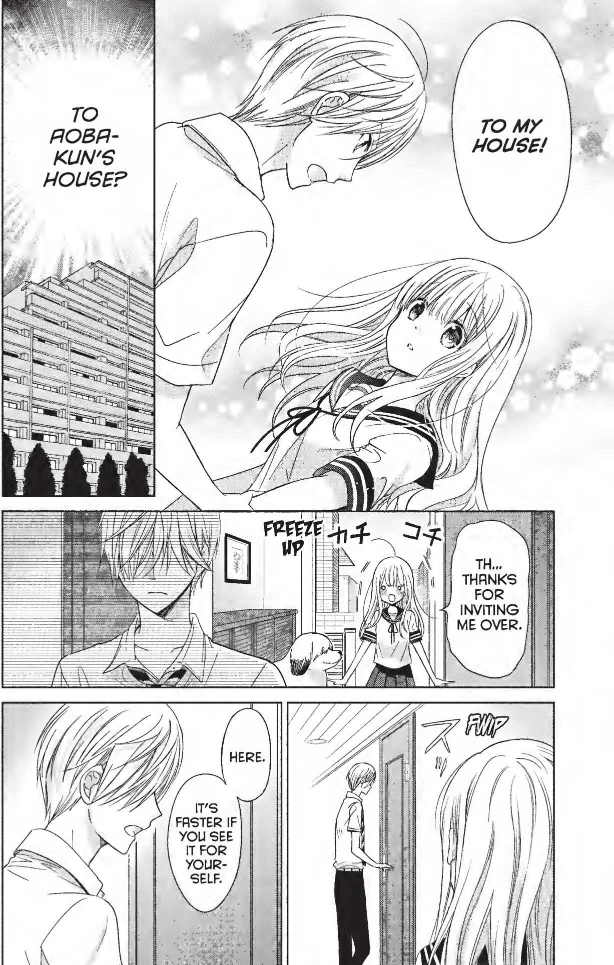

HUH...?
BESIDES,
EVEN IF IT WERE TRUE, WHY DOES IT MATTER?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO REJECTED SAKURADA-SAN.
SHE WAS THE FIRST PERSON YOU WENT TO AFTER WINNING THE LAST GAME...
...AND YOU COMPLIMENTED HER IN HER SWIMSUIT...
YOU SEEM TO HAVE FEELINGS FOR HER, MAN!

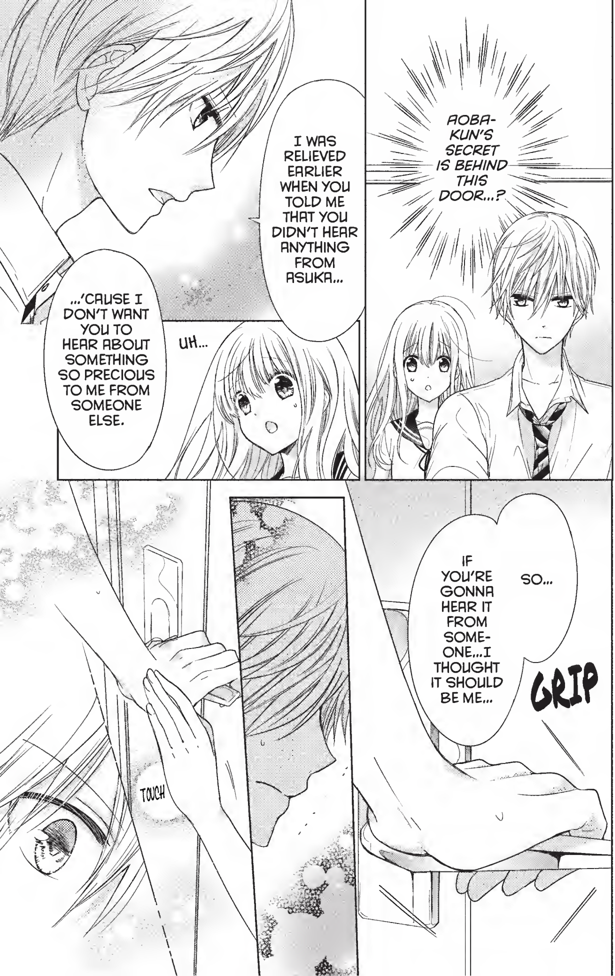

FEEL-INGS...? FOR HER...?

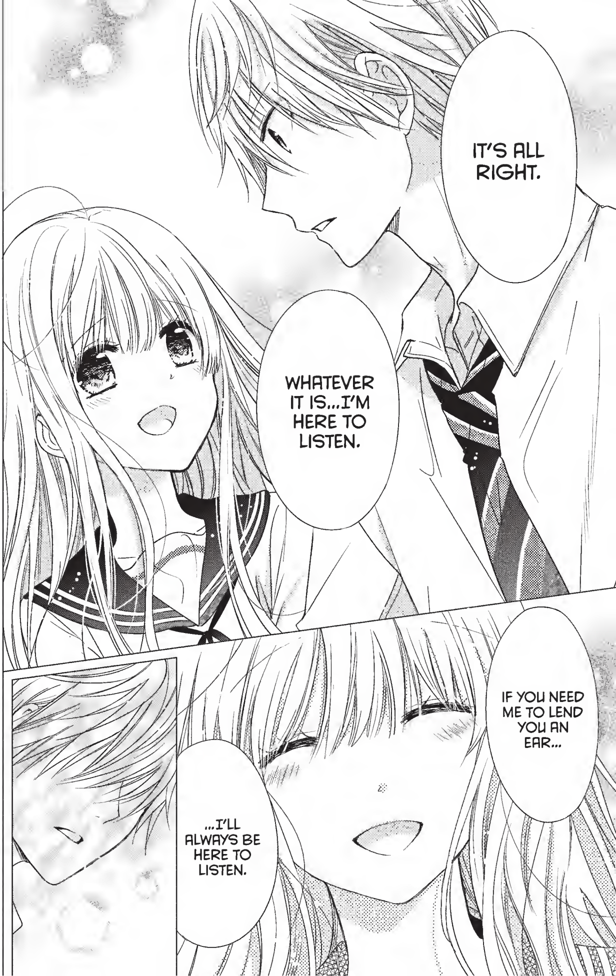

ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T NEED HELP WASHING THE BENTO BOXES?
YEAH! I'LL FINISH IT IN NO TIME!
I'M GLAD EVERYONE FINISHED ALL THE FOOD...!
FSSSHHH
I THINK THE GARLIC ONE WAS THE MOST POPULAR...
SAKU-RADA.
I'M SORRY ABOUT EARLIER...

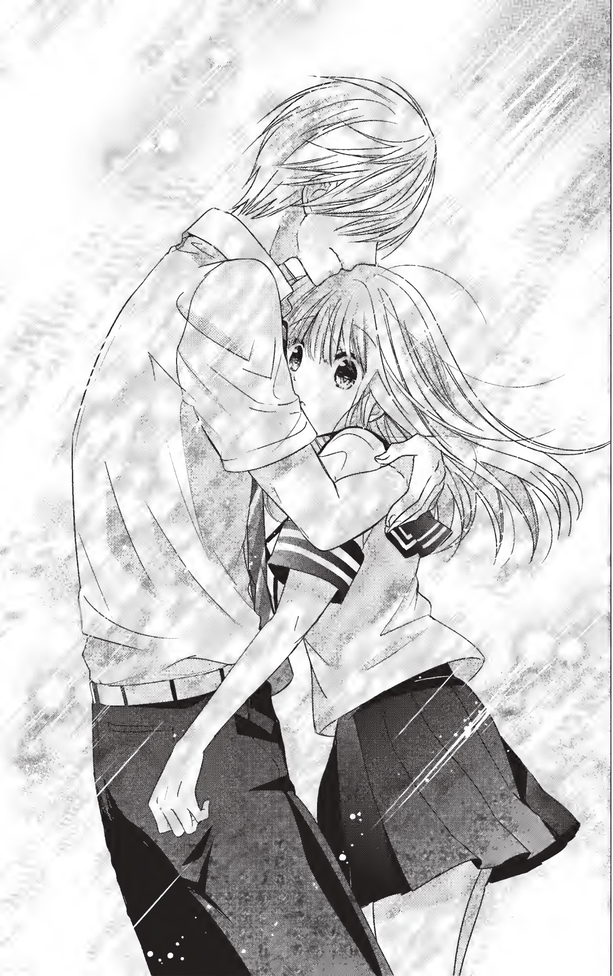

AOBA-KUN?!
I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK THIS OF YOU NOW, BUT...
WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO LISTEN...
...TO THE THING I COULDN'T TELL YOU BEFORE?
HUH?!
B-BUT! I'M JUST ...
WOULDN'T YOU RATHER HAVE UMEKI-SAN...?
AOBA-KUN... SEEMS LIKE HE'S DESPERATE.
ARE YOU SURE ...
...YOU WANT ME TO BE THE ONE?

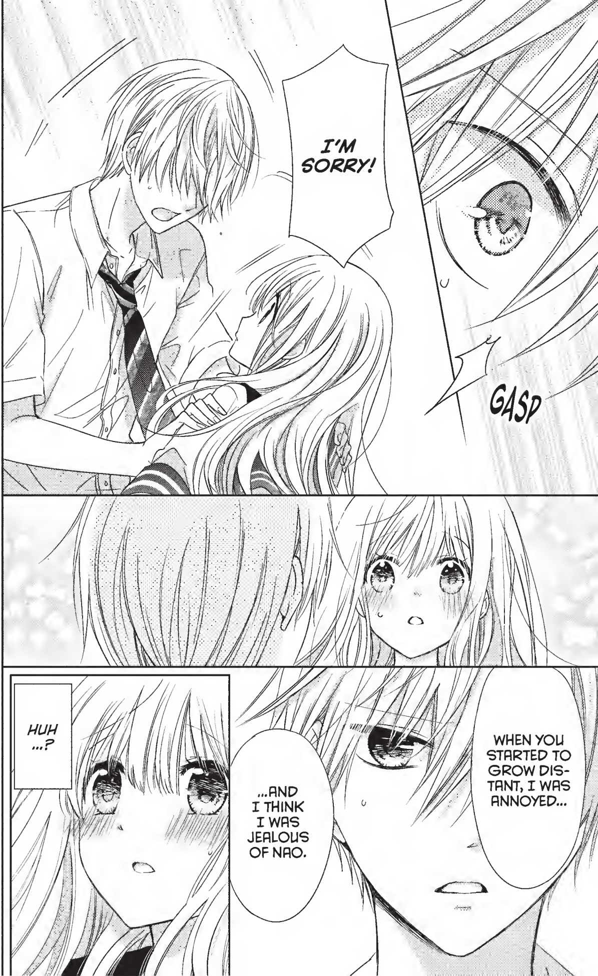

I'M SURE!
I ALSO WANT TO LISTEN TO YOU...!
GRAB
THEN COME ON!

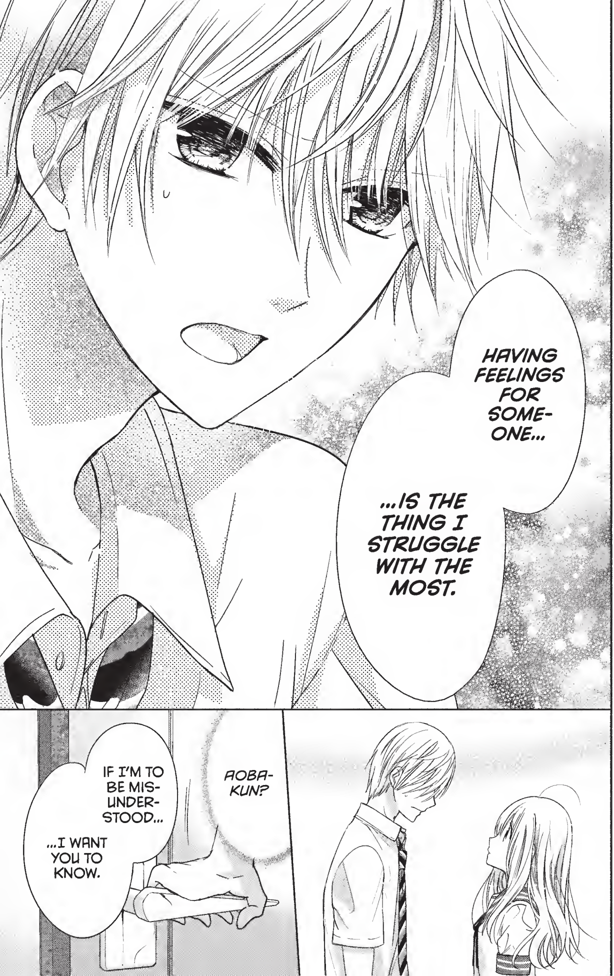

TO MY HOUSE!
TO AOBA-KUN'S HOUSE?
カチ コチ
FREEZE UP
TH... THANKS FOR INVITING ME OVER.
ス
FWIP
HERE.
IT'S FASTER IF YOU SEE IT FOR YOURSELF.

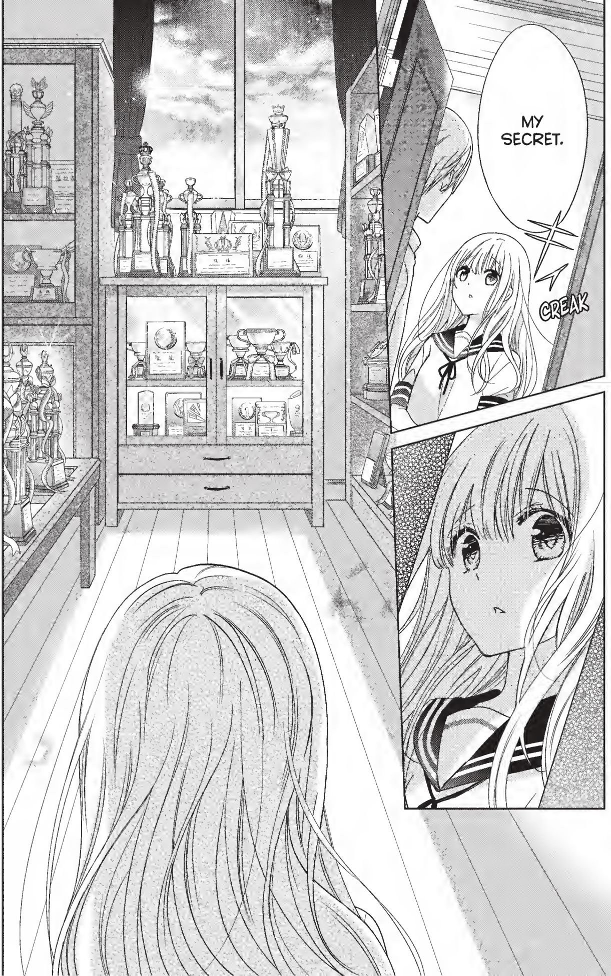

AOBA-KUN'S SECRET IS BEHIND THIS DOOR...?
I WAS RELIEVED EARLIER WHEN YOU TOLD ME THAT YOU DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING FROM ASUKA...
UH...
...'CAUSE I DON'T WANT YOU TO HEAR ABOUT SOMETHING SO PRECIOUS TO ME FROM SOMEONE ELSE.
SO...
IF YOU'RE GONNA HEAR IT FROM SOMEONE...I THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE ME...
GRIP
TOUCH

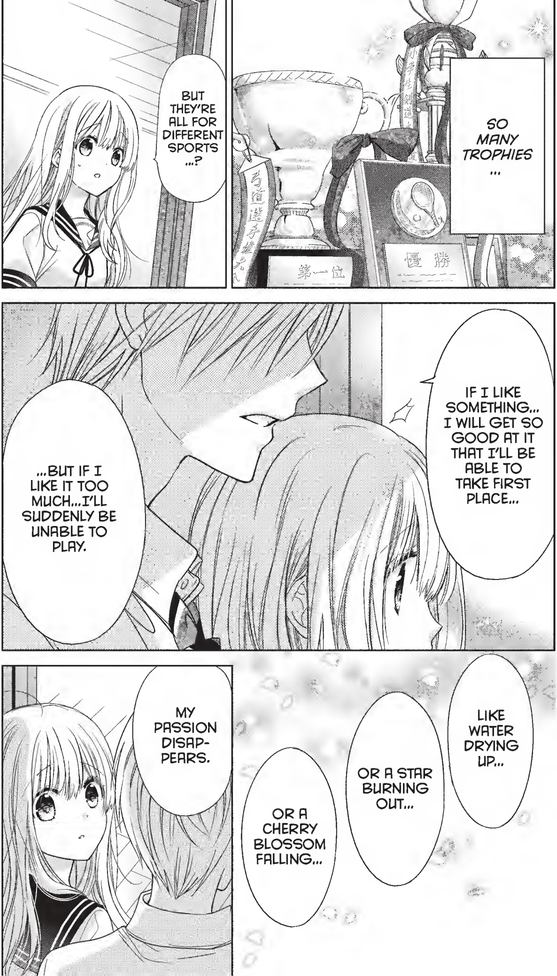

IT'S ALL RIGHT.
WHATEVER IT IS...I'M HERE TO LISTEN.
IF YOU NEED ME TO LEND YOU AN EAR...
...I'LL ALWAYS BE HERE TO LISTEN.

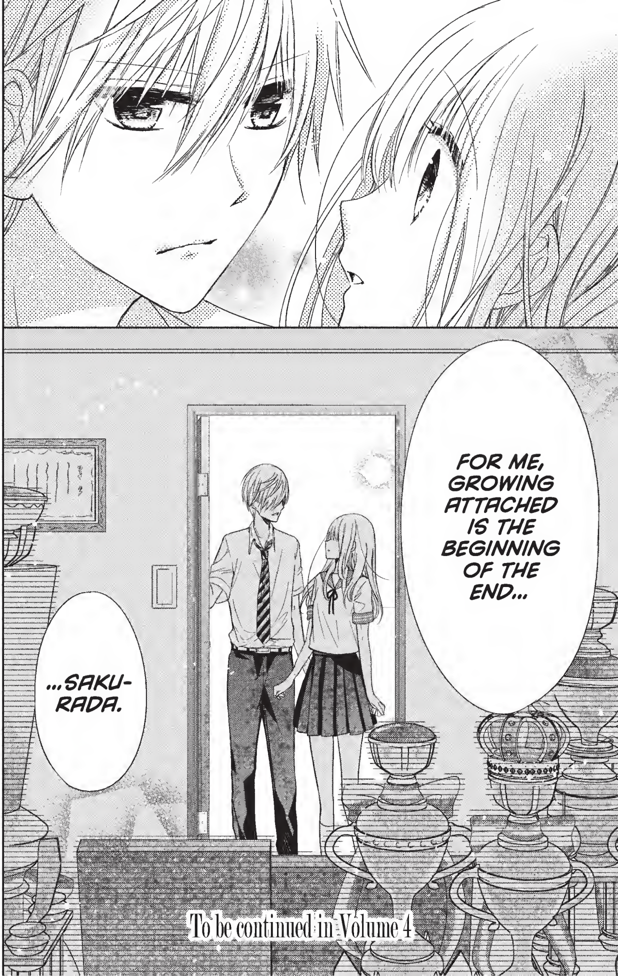



I'M SORRY!
GASP
WHEN YOU STARTED TO GROW DISTANT, I WAS ANNOYED...
...AND I THINK I WAS JEALOUS OF NAO.
HUH ...?


HAVING FEELINGS FOR SOMEONE...
...IS THE THING I STRUGGLE WITH THE MOST.
AOBA-KUN?
IF I'M TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD...
...I WANT YOU TO KNOW.


MY SECRET.
CREAK


SO MANY TROPHIES...
優勝
第一位
BUT THEY'RE ALL FOR DIFFERENT SPORTS...?
IF I LIKE SOMETHING... I WILL GET SO GOOD AT IT THAT I'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE FIRST PLACE...
...BUT IF I LIKE IT TOO MUCH...I'LL SUDDENLY BE UNABLE TO PLAY.
LIKE WATER DRYING UP...
OR A STAR BURNING OUT...
OR A CHERRY BLOSSOM FALLING...
MY PASSION DISAPPEARS.


FOR ME, GROWING ATTACHED IS THE BEGINNING OF THE END...
...SAKURADA.

To be continued in Volume 4

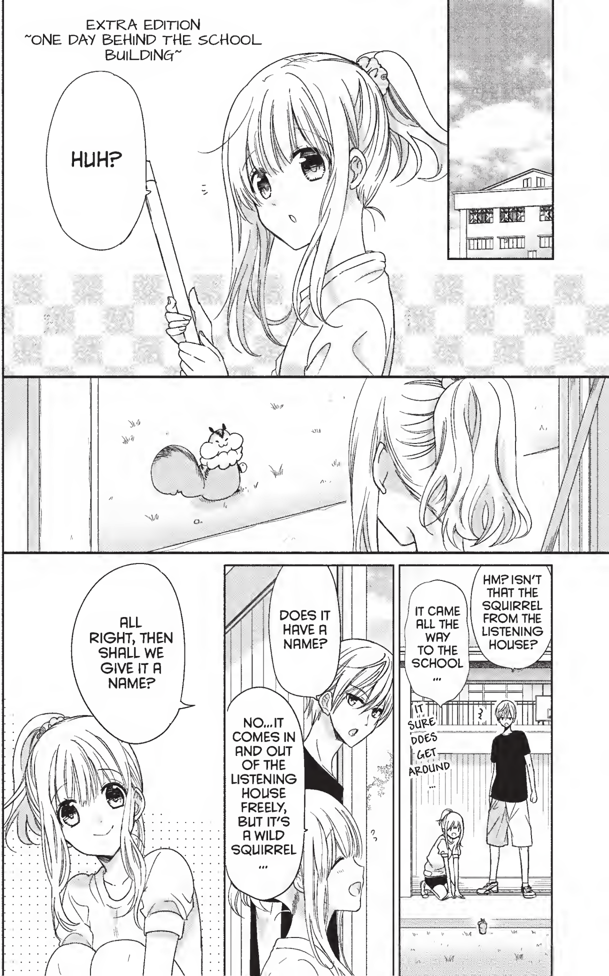
Thank you very much for reading until the end of Volume 3. I feel relieved that Aoba-kun's secret is finally out of the bag. And Nao had a larger role. I'm giving my best to the next volume, as well!! That reminds me, Mayo came in second place in the Nakayoshi General Election. Thank you!

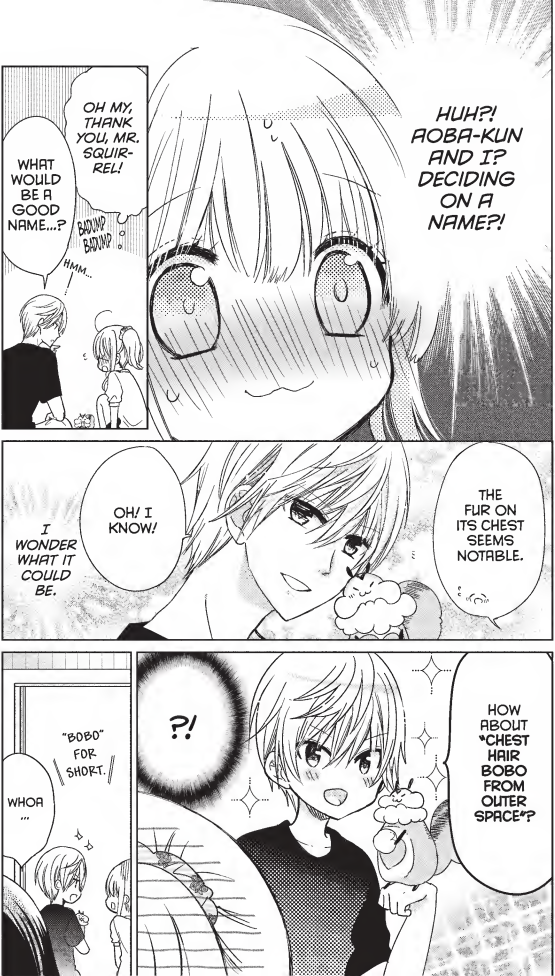
Mayonnaise-loving Mayo promised that she'd share her secret if selected, didn't she?! Although Aoba-kun would stare wide-eyed at Mayo and say, "Huh? You call that a secret?" Anyway, I hope to see you in Volume 4, too!

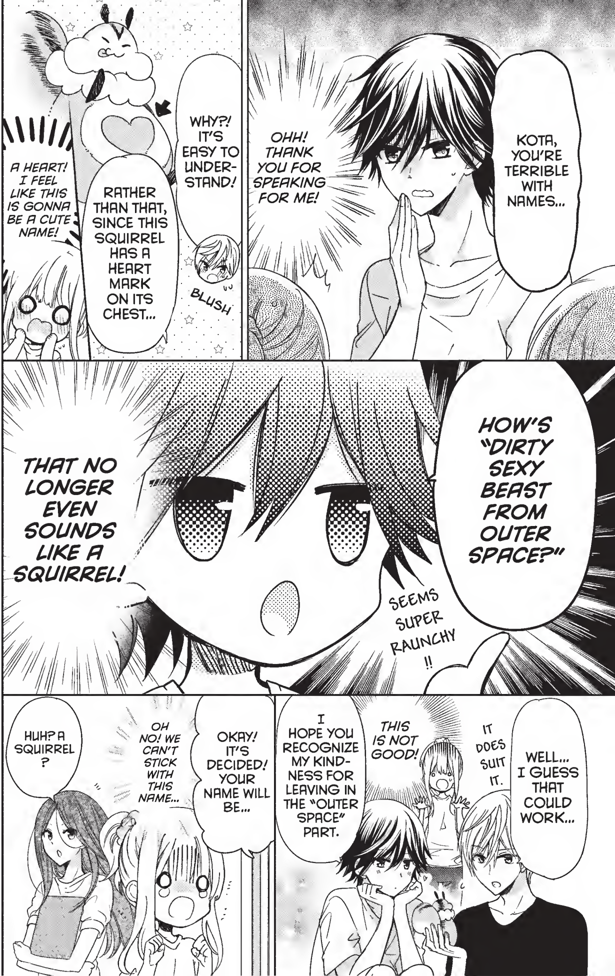
I got a question in a fan letter asking what the squirrel's name is, so I included it in the extra story! But since there's no room to include it this volume... That's the kind of name it is.

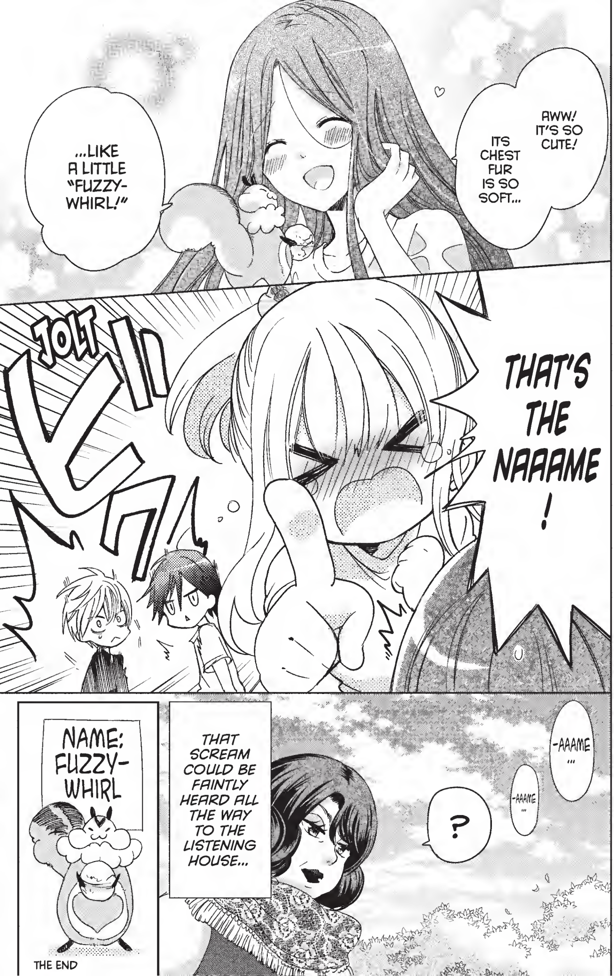
SHE'S SLEEPING...

EXTRA EDITION ~ONE DAY BEHIND THE SCHOOL BUILDING~


HUH?
HM? ISN'T THAT THE SQUIRREL FROM THE LISTENING HOUSE?
IT CAME ALL THE WAY TO THE SCHOOL...
IT SURE DOES GET AROUND...
DOES IT HAVE A NAME?
NO...IT COMES IN AND OUT OF THE LISTENING HOUSE FREELY, BUT IT'S A WILD SQUIRREL...
ALL RIGHT, THEN SHALL WE GIVE IT A NAME?


HUH?! AOBA-KUN AND I? DECIDING ON A NAME?!
OH MY, THANK YOU, MR. SQUIRREL!
WHAT WOULD BE A GOOD NAME...?
BADUMP BADUMP
HMM...
THE FUR ON ITS CHEST SEEMS NOTABLE.
OH! I KNOW!
I WONDER WHAT IT COULD BE.
HOW ABOUT "CHEST HAIR BOBO FROM OUTER SPACE"?
?!
"BOBO" FOR SHORT.
WHOA ...


KOTA, YOU'RE TERRIBLE WITH NAMES...
OHH! THANK YOU FOR SPEAKING FOR ME!
WHY?! IT'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND!
BLUSH
RATHER THAN THAT, SINCE THIS SQUIRREL HAS A HEART MARK ON ITS CHEST...
A HEART! I FEEL LIKE THIS IS GONNA BE A CUTE NAME!
HOW'S "DIRTY SEXY BEAST FROM OUTER SPACE?"
SEEMS SUPER RAUNCHY !!
THAT NO LONGER EVEN SOUNDS LIKE A SQUIRREL!
WELL... I GUESS THAT COULD WORK...
IT DOES SUIT IT.
THIS IS NOT GOOD!
I HOPE YOU RECOGNIZE MY KINDNESS FOR LEAVING IN THE "OUTER SPACE" PART.
OKAY! IT'S DECIDED! YOUR NAME WILL BE...
OH NO! WE CAN'T STICK WITH THIS NAME...
HUH? A SQUIRREL ?


AWW! IT'S SO CUTE!
ITS CHEST FUR IS SO SOFT...
...LIKE A LITTLE "FUZZY-WHIRL!"
THAT'S THE NAAAME!
JOLT
-AAAME...
-AAAME...
?
THAT SCREAM COULD BE FAINTLY HEARD ALL THE WAY TO THE LISTENING HOUSE...
NAME: FUZZY-WHIRL
THE END

Aoba-kun's Confessions 3

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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Translation by David Rhie
Lettering by Rina Mapa
Editing by Sarah Tilson
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